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MEMOIRS

OF

MIRABEAU:

BIOGRAPHICAL, LITERARY, AND POLITICAL.

BY HIMSELF,

HIS FATHER, HIS UNCLE, AND HIS ADOPTED CHILD.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

DUMONT says, in his work * on the extraordinary man whose private life, hitherto so little known, forms the subject of the following volumes,—"Mirabeau had a son five or six years old, whose mother I did not know. The poor boy was loved and neglected by his father. 'That child,' said Mirabeau, by way of praise, 'has a ferocious heart.' He thought that everything connected with the blood of a Mirabeau must needs be extraordinary. Finding the poor child very much neglected, I caressed and fondled him, and was much surprised at seeing this pretended ferocious little animal take my hands, not to bite, but to kiss them. He appeared to me of an amiable disposition, and might easily have been managed with a little affectionate care."

* Recollections of Mirabeau, by Etienne Dumont, of Geneva, p. 249 of the Third Edition. London: Churton.

Mirabeau died soon after, and bequeathed this child to the "affectionate care" of his sister, by whom he was brought up. The poor little neglected boy grew into man's estate; and after struggling during a quarter of a century to fulfil the last wishes of his father, namely, that of justifying his memory to the world, has at length accomplished the task in the volumes, a translation of which is here offered to the public.

As a legislator and a statesman, as the greatest orator that modern times has produced, Mirabeau will be known to the remotest posterity. But much ignorance prevails respecting his private life; and the letters from the Donjon of Vincennes have led to so many unfounded surmises, to so much calumny, that a foul stain has hitherto remained upon the memory of the most remarkable man of the last century, whose premature death, soon after the outbreak of the French revolution, led to the overthrow of a monarchy which he alone could have saved.

The materials upon which these Memoirs are founded consist of the private papers of the Mirabeau family, all in the possession of the author, who has given from them copious extracts of a highly interesting nature, and corroborative of all he advances. He has triumph-

antly refuted the calumnies cast upon Mirabeau, whose errors he has, however, exposed without disguise or concealment, and laid open his whole life in a work which contains much new and valuable information, and so many sources of gratification and excitement, that it will naturally be read with great avidity.

A translation of these Memoirs has been eagerly demanded for some time past; and the publisher, anxious to meet the wishes of the public, has spared no exertion to bring it out as speedily as possible. The extreme difficulty of this translation proved a great obstacle at first, as few persons, however conversant with the French language, are able perfectly to comprehend some parts of the original, especially the extracts from the correspondence between the Marquis of Mirabeau and the Bailli, his brother, written in a style as singular as it is forcible and piquant. Should the present volumes satisfy public expectation, they will shortly be followed by the remainder of the work.

London, February 20th, 1835.

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INTRODUCTION.

In 1783, Mirabeau adopted a child born the preceding year. His affection for this child was that of a fond parent; and during the remainder of his eventful life he was never separated from it, even while travelling. On his death-bed, Mirabeau left his adopted son to the kindness of his friends; and, as if he anticipated that their sterile and silent admiration would remain inactive in defending his memory against the attacks of party hatred, he bequeathed the task of such defence to this orphan, whose education he confided to his sister, Madame du Saillant. She was directed to teach him his duties, and to assist him, so far as she was able, in the fulfilment of his task.

This noble-minded woman faithfully executed her brother's trust. I am the orphan, and shall endeavour, in like manner, to fulfil the duty imposed upon me.

Mirabeau is one of the men of modern times who have excited the public attention in a very extraordinary degree; nevertheless he is also one of those of whom the public knows the least. The statements, libels, notices,

appreciated, except by a thorough examination of his different works. In my account of them, I have traced the motive, and shown the effect of each of his writings, and also why they were undertaken. I have proved that he had no share whatever in several works attributed to him, and I have indicated how far he was concerned in those of which he was not the sole author.

With regard to his character as a legislator and a statesman, I have related his acts in that double capacity, both in the National Assembly and elsewhere, during the progress of the revolution, which event had his most active support during fifteen years. His own earnest exertions had tended to bring it about, and he contributed, more than any other man, to its results. In his private and political correspondence, as in his senatorial labours, I have shown him such as he was all his life: attached to the interests of the people, and at the same time favourable to the principles of monarchy; a consistent and wary adversary, an ardent and courageous enemy both of anarchy and of despotism. I have transcribed a few of his speeches which have already appeared in print; from others, I have merely extracted a few passages—the remainder, I have analysed, adding, according to their dates, and the subjects they treat of, several important speeches which he had prepared, and of which his premature death deprived the public. Finally, I have given the

and volumes, which, for the last fifty years, have been written upon this highly gifted man, are all equally devoid of truth.

Being entrusted with this family mission, and in possession of all the papers relative to his family connexions, I have, by dint of arduous research and patient investigation, acquired evidence of my assertion. This evidence I now submit to the public.

I take three distinct views of the character of Mirabeau:

First, as a private individual;

Secondly, as a literary man and a political writer:

Thirdly, as a legislator and a statesman.

I could have wished, with regard to his private character, that it had depended upon me to say little; but others having, through hatred, thoughtlessness, or interested motives, exhausted all the calumnies that malice could devise, and given great importance to the most trivial errors of Mirabeau's youth, and to his family quarrels, it has become my duty to reduce these exaggerations to the standard of truth, refute the slander with which they are impregnated, admit and explain every fact I have ascertained to be true, and show, by undeniable evidence, that whenever in his private life he yielded to his passions,—and this was much less frequent than is generally imagined—he was really more unfortunate than guilty. As a literary man and a political writer, his merit could not be duly

wholly spent with his father the Marquis, and his uncle the Bailli of Mirabeau, both men of superior intellect, though little known; both sedate, austere, and religious; men of learning, and of genius; noble-minded and generous, resembling each other in many particulars, but different in this respect, that the father possessed the stern inflexibility of a despot, and a turn of mind purely speculative, whilst the Bailli allowed his reason to be convinced, and his mind to be swayed by the dictates and lessons of a practical philosophy, the severity of which was entirely directed against himself.

Firmly attached to each other by the tenderest affection, by a community of interests, and above all, by the almost fanatical pride of lineage, but never residing together, the two brothers, during a period of fifty years, wrote to each other more than four thousand letters, hitherto unpublished, and which are in my possession. In those written from 1750 to 1784, Mirabeau's name occurs in almost every page. He was the constant object of the brother's solicitude, as a child, as a youth, and as a man; and the more so, because he always resided with one of them, and during the eleven following years he remained dependent upon them. This correspondence, therefore, reflects his character, as in a domestic mirror. Extracts from this correspondence compose nearly the first volume of my work, which may thus be considered a mere compilation.

In writing the private life of Mirabeau, I have borrowed largely from these family letters, as likewise from those of Mirabeau to his father, his uncle, his mother, his wife, and his sisters; from those to Madame de Mounier, and to several of his friends, Boucher, Lafage, Dupont de Nemours, and others. These hitherto unpublished and unknown documents show the suspicions and accusations against him, and from them also are deduced explanations in justification of his life, emanating not from Mirabeau himself, but from his witnesses, his detractors, and his natural judges.

With regard to Mirabeau's public life, I have consulted not only those works which purport to give an account of it, but a number of letters which he wrote to public characters, and also the numerous manuscripts which he left me for the purpose of vindicating his character.

The book I here present to the public is not one of those compilations in which well-known facts are republished, with some slight alterations; neither does it resemble those supposed memoirs which have lately been so much in vogue. Not the slightest doubt can possibly be raised as to the authenticity of the facts I have advanced. The original documents are in my possession, and any person may inspect them by applying to me. I shall further add, that were even that not the case, every doubt would be removed by the

perusal of two pages of any of the hitherto unpublished documents which compose the greatest part of this work.

There are some things that cannot be invented: it would baffle the ingenuity of the ablest fabricator of apocryphal memoirs to imagine, for instance, one of the hundred letters, one of the thousand pages which I have transcribed, written by the Marquis and the Bailli of Mirabeau. Fastidious critics may find fault with the style; better and purer may certainly exist, but none could describe with more wit and spirit, situations and characters so perfectly unlike any thing in our present state of society,—none could express more forcibly the unflinching severity of these two brothers, constituting themselves judges, the one of his son, the other of his nephew. I even doubt that any writer ever possessed greater power and originality of expression.

I will not further extend this introduction to a book which is not a panegyric, but a work written from the most conscientious motives; neither will I speak of myself—for I have not once thought of myself in this work of duty. I will not even attempt to excuse the imperfections of my labours, which filial love alone prompted me to undertake. My education, which Mirabeau did not live to commence, has not, perhaps, qualified me for the task; and circumstances have

MEMOIRS OF MIRABEAU.

BOOK I.

When a man has occupied the thoughts, and excited the attention of his contemporaries, and has exercised great influence over his own and subsequent epochs, he, and all that relates to him, become objects of public curiosity. The world investigates what he has been, judges all his actions, and desires to be made acquainted with his origin, the particulars of his early life, those relating to his family, the causes that have acted upon him, the inspirations that have prompted him, and ultimately, by what secret, slow, and almost imperceptible degrees he became a public man, and effected those results which have left so deep an imprint upon the past, and will transmit to remote posterity the tale of his brief existence.

Mirabeau has been, and is still, the especial object of this kind of curiosity. It has been said of him, that his moral nature, more than that of any other man, was sub-

ordinate to his physical nature, of which it was the exact, but involuntary and forced counterpart; that private, not less than public circumstances, made him what he was; that individualities of family, as well as circumstances of time and place, also exercised their influence over him. Nothing is more true. No man at his birth had his future life traced out with greater precision, through the accident of noble birth, the moral and physical organisation of his ancestors, and the peculiar temperament of his family. No man ever proved in a more clear and striking manner that great principle of nature, by which, for the perpetuation of the different races, successive generations transmit to each other their forms, their faculties, their wants and their appetites, their good qualities and their defects.

Such was the character of the singular race of the Mirabeaus, that they alone could have given birth to the subject of these memoirs: he could not have been produced in any other family. This truth will be admitted by all who read the hitherto unpublished notice which Mirabeau devoted to the memory of his ancestors, especially to that of his grandfather, the Marquis John Anthony. This notice was written in the author's youth, and we place it at the commencement of our book, because it forms the most appropriate introduction, and is, in our estimation, worthy of Mirabeau, although at that period of his life he was only

an inexperienced writer. It relates many noble actions and useful services; it gives descriptions of striking characters, hitherto unknown, and presents a multitude of energetic and extraordinary facts, both comic and sublime. It presents, in short, an animated picture of times so essentially different from ours. But what enhances its value is, that without serving as an excuse for what is reprehensible in Mirabeau's private life, this lively family picture explains it in part, showing that parents such as his must naturally have had such a son, and that Mirabeau, descending from them, could not have been other than he was.

We have therefore transcribed this notice as he wrote it at the Château d' If, towards the close of 1774; and we have faithfully copied the autograph manuscript, with the exception of some particulars which we give in the form of notes, thinking that they interfered with the narrative. We have also considered it advisable to add to these notes, as explanatory remarks, some extracts from the unpublished private writings of Mirabeau's father, surnamed "The Friend of Men." These extracts are interesting, and being often necessary to our work, we hope that our arrangement will meet with the reader's approbation.

LIFE OF JOHN ANTHONY DE RIQUETI, MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU, TOGETHER WITH A NOTICE OF HIS FAMILY, WRITTEN BY HIS ELDEST GRANDSON, FROM THE NOTES OF HIS SON.

MEN are sons before they bear any other title, or enjoy any right. Filial respect is therefore the first duty of man, and, from that very circumstance, becomes the first social tie, and the beginning of public and private morals. The seed of filial respect, carried even to superstition, which has evidently been sown within us by nature, appears to have been the chief means by which the peculiar manners of that privileged empire* have been maintained, which, during forty centuries have remained stationary, amid the vicissitudes of the world. It may moreover be asserted, that all the public institutions of the ancients, as they declined with the morals of the people, showed more particular symptoms of decay, in proportion as filial respect and parental authority became weaker.

Every man endowed with sense and feeling, must therefore consider it his bounden duty to strengthen unremittingly, under his own roof, those domestic ties which bind the great family of human society. This duty is the more imperative, because everything tends to overthrow or displace its strong and ancient founda-

* China.—*Editor.*

tions,—because a false civilisation destroys the social union, dissolves the bond of general interest, to assemble individual interests in contemptible groups, and makes the calculations of heartless selfishness usurp the place of lofty public virtue. Low and disgraceful vices succeed the vices of ferocity; no other qualities are acknowledged but those which distinguish the reed among shrubs, for we are become weak, pliant, smooth, and easily corrupted.

Ever since I can remember, I have seen my father and uncle celebrate and honour the memory of our ancestors, several of whom were illustrious, not through courtly favour, or from the wages of servility, but by manly virtues, and services rendered to their country, the true and only source of real fame. I despair of imitating them, impossible as it is for me to endeavour to follow their footsteps; but I will at least hold up their example to my children. I employ the leisure moments now forced upon me, in collecting family traditions which would soon be consigned to oblivion, and in sketching the character of my grandfather. I will use the most strenuous endeavours to save his memory from the unmerited oblivion into which it would otherwise fall, by relating several interesting and extraordinary anecdotes, several truly heroic actions, which illustrate a character certainly not faultless, and whose good qualites were characterised by inequality and excess, but which was great and noble. The blemishes which human

weakness may have imparted to that character, far from diminishing its lustre, served only to make it stand out in more prominent relief.

In 1267 and 1268, during one of those revolutions to which the constant struggle between the empire and the sacerdotal power gave rise, the family of the Arrighetti, conspicuous in the party of the Gibelines, were driven from Florence. The act of proscription mentions the names of nine individuals of this family, and among others, *Azzucius Arrighetti, filius Gherardi, et omnes masculi descendentes ex eis.* Azzucius and his son Peter retired into Provence, where the former died in 1294. Peter Gherardus and Ugolinus were the children of Azzo Arrighetti, and the filiation substantiated by more original and authentic documents than could have been expected in a country laid waste by religious wars and party quarrels, has continued in a direct line from the head of our house who settled in France, down to the writer of the present notice. *

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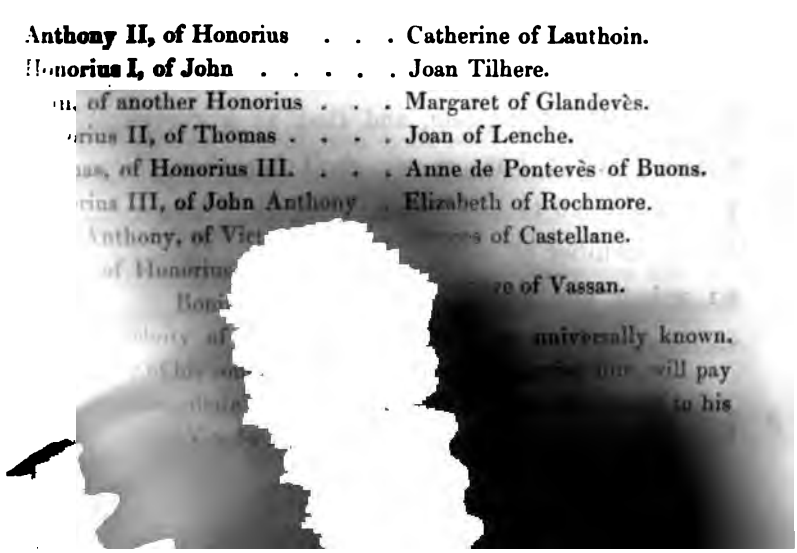
* These are the names of the Riqueti and their wives since their settlement in France:—

Azzo was the father of Gherardus.
Azzucius, or Azzucio, of Peter.

Peter, of Anthony	Sibilla of Fos, of the House of the Counts of Provence. Several Troubadours made her the theme of their lays.
Anthony, of James	Catherine of Cadenet.
James, of another Anthony . . .	Louisa of Pontevès.

It would be out of place here to trace a genealogical table: such puerile vanity would be appreciated at its true worth. It is contemptible to borrow lustre from a species of merit so perfectly unconnected with personal endowments, and which can be claimed by so many. It appears to us more appropriate to render due homage, in a kind of introduction, to the memory of our ancestors, and to the virtues of those whose actions dwell in the remembrance of men, in spite of the darkness and ignorance of the times in which they lived. We are free to confess, that to render this notice not altogether incomplete, we ought to have been able to make further researches, which might indeed have proved unsuccessful, but which we have not even had an opportunity of attempting. We here give all that we have gleaned from tradition, family papers, and the notices collected by the Marquis of Mirabeau.


Anthony II, of Honorius . . . Catherine of Lauthoin.
Honorius I, of John . . . . . Joan Tilhere.
of another Honorius . . . Margaret of Glandevès.
rius II, of Thomas . . . . Joan of Lenche.
of Honorius III. . . . Anne de Pontevès of Buons.
rius III, of John Anthony . Elizabeth of Rochmore.
Anthony, of Vic s of Castellane.
of Honorius
Boni
ze of Vassan.
liberty of
universally known.
will pay
to his

It is ascertained that the Arrighetti appeared in Provence with the rank and spirit of the high nobles of those days. They carefully preserved the pre-eminence of their order, purchased fiefs, held military commissions, founded hospitals, and endowed religious houses. Their motto was JUVAT PIETAS. Peter, settled on the very confines of France, on the summit of a mountain, (Seyne, where the family of the Arrighetti then settled, is the first town situated amid the Alps) founded an hospital almost immediately after his arrival. This fact, well known in the country, is attested by a judicial and municipal enquiry which John de Riqueti took care to have made when the hospital was destroyed. Our ancestors founded, at Marseilles, the convents of the Jesuits, the Chartreux, the Récolets, and other religious houses. Such foundations were the prevalent mania of the times, but it was extraordinary that the Arrighetti should indulge in it, as, during a period of nearly six hundred years, not one of the family had ever entered holy orders, with, however, one exception, and that at a comparatively recent period ; but, as we shall hereafter show, the person alluded to had but little vocation for the church. Every member of our family appears to have possessed an ardent and active mind, which is the leading characteristic of our race.

They sought betimes to render themselves useful. Peter married Sibilla of Fos, whose beauty and accom-

plishments were celebrated by the troubadours. This marriage proves the respect in which the proscribed family were held, since immediately on their arrival in the country where they had sought an asylum, they were enabled to form so brilliant an alliance.

His son, Anthony I, was judex-magnus of the province. This office corresponds with the dignity of grand seneschal. The judgments of the judex-magnus, who was a military magistrate, were without appeal, Provence at that period having no parliament*, and justice was administered in his name throughout the whole province. It was probably this Anthony, proved by his holding so high an office to have been no ordinary man, especially at a period when favour alone was not considered to confer merit, who removed with his family to Digne†.

James, the son of this Anthony, purchased, in 1412,

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* Some judgments still exist, rendered in the name of Anthony de Riqueti, at Marseilles, Digne, and Terrascon—that is to say, at the three extremities of the province.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

† Anthony died in 1412, (*note by the editor*). The tradition of the country, confirmed by a great number of manuscripts, attributes to this Anthony the iron chain which is still to be seen at Moustier. It crosses from one mountain to another, and in the middle there is a large star with five points, which has led to the opinion that the chain was placed there by a knight of the house of Blacas, the arms of that family having a similar star. It is said that the singular idea of chaining two mountains together originated in the fulfilment of a vow made at sea, by the Chevalier Anne de Riqueti, about the year 1390.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

the co-lordship of the town of Riez, then a bishop's see. We still possess the deed of purchase.

Another Riqueti was at the same period Lord of Siè̀yes. Two generations later, these different branches removed to Marseilles, where our house acquired its true lustre by deeds of public service. It was Honorius I, grandson of James de Riqueti, who made the family settle at Marseilles.

Those days did not resemble the periods when power and the curb of obedience, being concentrated in the sovereign authority, a few metropolitan cities, from the increased means of communications, and the great influx of the precious metals from the mines of the new world, reduced every other city to the rank and denomination of second-rate towns. In those days a republican spirit pervaded every town, more especially the prosperous commercial cities. A number of these cities recently united under the denomination of the "Hanseatic league," formed an association which not only secured their liberties, but established their independence; and they soon after declared war, in their own name, and formed alliances with the Northern powers.

Marseilles, always celebrated as a commercial city, was subject to the Roman sway, but as an ally. Its situation, its maritime advantages, the barrenness of its territory which left to its inhabitants no other resource than their industry, and more especially the spirit of enterprise shown by the Greek commercial

navigators who were the founders of that city, had rendered it, in ancient times, the principal entrepôt of all the trade of the seas then frequented. Marseilles had acknowledged as sovereigns the counts of the house of Anjou, but with stipulations that left it in a sort of independence, and separated it entirely from the rest of the country.

Marseilles, with the whole of Provence, became subject to the kings of France, but retained its privileges, and even when it acknowledged obedience to Henry IV, there was a clause in the treaty that the city should hold a sovereign court. Duvair, afterwards keeper of the seals, was created first president, and this arrangement subsisted for some time.

At the commencement of the sixteenth century, when all the great commercial towns had independent governments, Marseilles was besieged by the Constable of Bourbon, and though left to its own resources, was not taken. One of the privileges of this prosperous city, a privilege, it is true, which every other town in Provence also enjoyed, but which Marseilles exercised in proportion to its importance and opulence, was to have, as its chief magistrate or consul, none but a man of noble birth and of a distinguished military family. This officer exercised great influence in times of political excitement.

John de Riqueti, son of Honorius I, was first consul of Marseilles in 1562. Religious troubles first broke

out in that year, so full of fearful events. Several towns were surprised and taken; and among the most important were Rouen and Orleans, and the king of Navarre, father of Henry IV, lost his life at the retaking of the former. The great Duke of Guise* was killed at the siege of the latter. Marseilles and Provence, tainted by a feeling of popular non-conformism, since the appearance of the sects of the Vaudois and Albigeois, had besides too great intercourse with Dauphiny to escape religious quarrels. The old hatred against the Dukes of Savoy, who had proved themselves so hostile to freedom in their immediate neighbourhood—a hatred which contributed fully as much as the orthodox faith, to the destruction of catholicism at Geneva and in Dauphiny, was deeply rooted in upper Provence, and soon extended to the inhabitants of the sea coast, especially those of Marseilles. Trade, which assumes the name of commerce in maritime towns, is naturally inclined towards republicanism. The lodge, the exchange, the bank—all those different assemblies of merchants, form a kind of democratic senate. The new religion was republican, and the presence of men of all nations in great sea-port towns is highly favourable to the dissemination of new doctrines. The attack made upon

* Francis of Lorrain, Duke of Guise, assassinated by Poltrot, before Orleans, February 15th, 1563.—*Editor.*

Marseilles, with unabating vigour, was therefore less likely to fail than if it had been directed against any other city.

John de Riqueti anticipated the danger. The precautionary measures which he induced the municipal authorities to take, the ostensible object of which was to keep the people in check, had the effect of creating an insurrectionary movement. This bold and decisive measure deprived the conspirators of all their advantages, by rousing the energy of the loyal citizens. The struggle was violent. John narrowly escaped with his life in endeavouring to save that of a nobleman named Cipierre, deputed by the chiefs of the innovators. While leading him to prison, at the head of his guards, the populace seized the unfortunate envoy and literally tore him to pieces. Riqueti succeeded at length in driving the conspirators from the town, and sent to the Count of Sommerive, chief of the catholics, a reinforcement of three hundred men, levied at his own expense. He supplied, from his own resources, convoys of corn with which he provisioned Marseilles.

This energetic conduct could not fail to draw upon him the hatred of the opposite party; and Captain Mouvans, one of the most enterprising of the Huguenot chiefs, destroyed the hospital which Peter Arrighetti had founded at Seyne, and also his tomb, on which was a statue of him and his coat of arms. This implacable enemy burned as many of our family records and titles

as he could lay hands upon. Fortunately these facts were certified by a judicial inquiry, which John had the precaution to institute on the spot, in 1584; for this man seemed to have had a powerful mind, and consummate prudence.

With regard to the pecuniary means with which he accomplished so many things, we have not sufficiently examined our family archives to be able to determine how he obtained them. There was at that time a company established at Marseilles to carry on the coral fishery, and it is probable that John de Riqueti had a share in it. Be this as it may, he occupies a very conspicuous place in the annals of Provence, and must have amassed great wealth; for in spite of the immense sacrifices he was called upon to make during the disturbances that took place whilst he was at the head of public affairs, he purchased the estates of Mirabeau, Beaumont, and Negreaux. These estates were divided among his numerous family, and were afterwards united in the hands of one person. He also purchased at Marseilles a beautiful bastide or country house, extensive gardens, and a great deal of other property, which was still in possession of our family a few years ago.

This faithful chief received, as a gift from Charles IX, the feudal rents attached to these estates. He had opened the gates of Marseilles to this monarch, as his nephew opened them to Henry IV, his son to Louis XIII, and his grandson to Louis XIV. But the Bishop

of Digne, to whom the king had also granted these rents, disputed the right of John de Riqueti, and instituted law proceedings which lasted a considerable time. We merely mention this fact on account of a singular reply which appears in John's defence, and proves that a lively and decided turn of mind has ever been the characteristic of our family. The Bishop, in one of the judicial documents, alleges that "John de Riqueti, a trader of Marseilles, has obtained the king's gift surreptitiously."

John replied: "With regard to the title of trader of Marseilles, which would be derogatory to no one, since our kings have even invited the nobles to become participators in the commerce of this city, I am, or was, a police merchant, in the same manner that the Bishop is a vender of holy water. It will be remembered that I was First Consul of Marseilles in 1562, and every one knows, that to fill this office a man must be of noble lineage."

These expressions certainly bear the stamp of originality, especially for those times, and considering that they emanated from one of the firmest adherents of catholicism *.

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* John de Riqueti derived considerable emoluments from trade; all the nobles residing at Marseilles did the same, and there was perhaps not a single noble family in Provence, some branch of which was not settled in that opulent and populous city.

A distinction must be drawn, in this respect, between the

John's great age rendered him a witness of the principal events of those troubled times, and we find

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dependent maritime towns and those which were either metropolitan or independent cities. Bordeaux, Nantes, and other towns, were dependencies of their respective provinces, and their nobles did not engage in commerce, at least in their own name; but Venice, Genoa, and, although of less importance, Marseilles, which under Louis XIV was declared a free port, were looked upon as cities possessing no territory, and genealogists agree in stating that the nobles of these cities were merchants, as in other parts they were landed proprietors.

We mean simply to state an historical fact of some importance to the nobles of our provinces; but we are far from desirous of being considered as offering an excuse for an act derogatory from their rank. This would be both base and ungrateful. John de Riqueti was the most illustrious of our ancestors in France, and indeed one of the most illustrious of our house, some of whose members reached the highest dignities in the republic of Florence. God forbid that we should spurn the means to which we have owed an independent fortune! That fortune must of necessity have had an origin, and commerce without monopoly (and monopoly did not exist in those days, since it is always occasioned by the government, and the government at that period bore the mildest form,) in a country where the highest nobles had always been engaged in it, is unquestionably more honourable, as the means of acquiring riches, than the plunder allowed in war, or the price of servility at court. A man ought to be judged by the noble and generous use he makes of his wealth, not by the profession he followed whilst he was acquiring it.

The facts we have stated, and the high reputation which our family have enjoyed at Marseilles down to the present time, prove that John de Riqueti received from his ancestors, and transmitted to his posterity, the loftiest sentiments of honour and generosity.

Nostradamus, the author of a history of Provence, had acquired

him, in 1596, obliged to fly from his country, which he could no longer defend. His property was ravaged by

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great celebrity among the people, who at that time firmly believed in astrology. He states a fact which has led to many malicious reports, mentioned by my father in his works, in order to show his family how little confidence ought to be placed in anecdotes, or in traditions founded upon anecdotes. We transcribe the words of Nostradamus:—"Proceeding now to the most tyrannical extortions of money, they found that the Sieur of Mirabeau, of the family of the Riqueti, enjoying an honourable rank at Marseilles, and one of the richest merchants of that city, had absented himself to avoid paying the excessive sum of fourteen thousand crowns. This absence so enraged these petty tyrants, that they had the audacity to imprison the wife of this nobleman, an honourable lady, to carry off every thing in her house, and to place their scoundrels in it." This lady had, in 1564, married our fifth ancestor; her name was Margaret of Glandevès. She possessed no less courage than her husband; and in the history of Marseilles, it is recorded, that the tyrant Casaux having visited her in prison, thinking to prevail upon her to pay her ransom, she answered with as much prudence as spirit, despised his threats, reproached him with his robberies, and foretold his speedy punishment.

We may here remark, that in our family it has been the singular good fortune of our ancestors to have almost always obtained as wives women of superior merit. Their testamentary arrangements display a remarkably energetic female spirit, and a perfect accordance of opinion with their husbands.

Joan of Lenche, daughter-in-law of the Lady of Glandevès, was a woman of consummate prudence. The following popular story respecting her has been handed down by the tradition of the country.

Joan of Lenche, who married Honorius II in 1592, brought him as her dowry the house in the Place de Lenche, the finest residence in Marseilles. This square was at that period the only market-place of the town, which has since become so considerable.

the tyrant Casaux, that ferocious provost of Marseilles, who made himself master of the city, and was about to

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Joan, from the terrace of her house, could observe the servants making their purchases. She knew to what families they belonged, and observed which of them bought the dearest fish, "in order," as she stated, "not to lend her money to their masters." This anecdote is characteristic of the simplicity of the times.

Her daughter-in-law, Anne of Pontevès, was proud and overbearing, but possessed a lofty mind, and great firmness of character. There are several anecdotes of her extant; they remind me of one which an aunt of my grandmother's, Madame de Chateauneuf, who died in 1710, used to relate. This lady was so completely imbued with the proud spirit of those times, so heroic in comparison with ours, that she addressed the following lines to her nephew, whose undaunted courage and lofty temper will be shown in the course of this work:—

"Do you call yourselves men? Ye are nothing but degenerated men. In our days we carried pistols in our belts, and knew how to use them."

Such women would certainly exercise but little influence over the young fops of the present day, but they perpetuated high moral feeling and honour in their families.

This same Anne of Pontevès, being at the holy water fount, Madame de Foresta, of a highly respectable family of Provence, passed before her, in order to perform the usual ceremony of crossing herself with the water, when Anne pushed her aside, and striking her, said—

"Here, as well as at the army, the baggage goes behind."

Her adventure with the Chevalier de Griasque will be related presently, and will serve to illustrate female character in those days.

Elizabeth of Rochemore, daughter-in-law of Anne of Pontevès, was distinguished in this age of urbanity for her accomplishments. Madame de Sevigné, in speaking of her, says, "Is Madame de Beaumont as witty as ever?" She was, indeed, more than witty;

give it up to the Spaniards, when he was killed. The tyranny of Casaux ceased only on the surrender of

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she had all the virtues of her excellent mother. She governed her family during twelve years of widowhood with care and success.

My father, in a printed panegyric, celebrated the virtues of his respected mother, Frances of Castellane, wife of that John Anthony de Riqueti, concerning whom I am writing.

But to return to John. It was at Marseilles, and in commercial pursuits, that he realised his great wealth. It certainly could not have been at Seyne, at Digne, at Riez, nor at Moustier. Honorius I, father of John, was the first of the family who settled at Marseilles. John must have owed his fortunes to his own exertions; this is evident from the enormous sacrifices he made in his public career, and the great wealth he left behind him, sufficient to enrich three branches of his family. This immense fortune was divided among seven sons and two daughters, and the share of each was large enough to allow the junior branches to found the first house of Jesuits at Marseilles, the house of Sainte-Jeaume. John was thus the architect of his own fortune. Sticklers for genealogic purity will no doubt say, "but Nostradamus mentions John de Riqueti AS ONE OF THE RICHEST TRADERS OF MARSEILLES." No doubt, this must have been the fact, or he must have plundered. How is it otherwise possible to account for his public gifts, the magnitude of his undertakings, and the great influence he exercised? Besides, it has been shown that he was amerced in a sum of fourteen thousand crowns, by Casaux; and how enormous that sum was for those days, may be imagined from the remark of Nostradamus, who says:

"The tyrant exacted thirty sous entrance money from those whom he sent to prison, thirty sous on their discharge, and ten sous per diem for the gaoler, during the prisoner's detention;" and this the historian terms an "ENORMOUS VEXATION."

But although John de Riqueti had a considerable share in great commercial speculations, his answer to the Bishop of Digne plainly shows how impatiently he submitted to the appellation of "trader." And whether this title could in justice be applied to him, will be

Marseilles to the Duke of Guise, governor of the province, who took possession of it in the name of

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seen by the enquiry which he solicited from the parliament in 1584, and made at the place where his ancestors had resided. The very ravages committed by his enemies served to guide him: they had destroyed all the monuments from which we derived our fame. John caused these facts to be attested, and preserved the memory of his ancestors by this authentic and detailed enquiry, which has been admitted in all the proofs we have been called upon to make, and especially in those required by the chapter of Maubeuge. But why expatiate upon these events? Vanity of vanities! Have we not all of us the canopy of heaven above our heads?

It behoves the man whom Providence has destined to be the bearer of a great name to show himself worthy of it, in the same manner that a man, born without such advantage, ought to endeavour to establish one; in other words, it is our duty to preserve or merit the public gratitude, which sooner or later is the sure reward of actions performed for the benefit of society. Every man born in a superior rank of society, and who does nothing worthy of that rank, may be considered in the light of a bankrupt. There are duties attached to high station, the first of which is the preservation of that pre-eminence. The first of social duties is therefore the maintenance of family honour; opportunity and time do the rest. I cannot foresee the future fate of our house; its decline has been even more rapid than its rise: but this I know—it was ever great and noble; it sought at all times to maintain itself by honourable means, and founded its greatness upon public respect and esteem. Vanity is a common failing, but ours was not a mere weakness, especially in an age when money had not yet, by the purchase of titles, confounded all distinctions in the social hierarchy, and substituted for the evils attendant on hereditary nobility that singular and truly anti-social invention, the baseness of a nobility bought, sold, and bartered.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

Henry IV. This revolution was brought about by a conspiracy against the municipal tyranny which oppressed the city. The alarm was given at one of the gates, Casaux rushed to the spot, and Liberta, chief of the conspirators, stabbed him at the very moment he was admitting the Spaniards.

The Duke of Guise entered the town, and in the treaty with that prince, it was stipulated that Liberta should become provost, and Ogier de Riqueti, the nephew of John, first consul; which proves sufficiently that the party of our house supported Liberta in the insurrection. That intrepid citizen, who died without issue, was of a Corsican family, and had assumed the name of Liberta in consequence of an exploit of the same nature performed in his own country.

John de Riqueti, who maintained Marseilles under the sway of Charles IX, had the satisfaction of seeing his native city restored by his family to Henry IV. Thus, a long life, however eventful, always brings consolation to virtue. Times of discord and anarchy have one advantage among a thousand evils: men are formed and put to the test; numerous families become a positive good, if it be only as rallying points; the turbulent activity of youth finds useful employment; and old age is revered, consulted, believed, and obeyed.

Honorius II, the son of John de Riqueti, maintained, as his father had done, the royal authority at Marseilles. He obtained, in 1614, letters patent of

gentleman of the bed-chamber, a distinction as honourable in those days as it is valueless in our times. He was first consul in 1621, and was deputed at the head of the nobles to compliment Louis XIII, then besieging Montpellier. A considerable convoy of provisions which he brought with him in the name of the city, caused him to be received in the most distinguished manner, and the king took his son Thomas with him to court. *

This Honorius appears to have enjoyed great influence in Marseilles; his authority maintained the Jesuits against a powerful cabal. This order, though continually accused of political and secret vices, had rendered itself at all times sufficiently useful, to justify the zeal

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* We will here add an anecdote which Mirabeau has omitted, but which is related by La Chenaye des Bois, in his "Dictionary of the Nobility," vol. xii. p. 121. "Two days after this audience with the king, the spies brought intelligence that the enemy were to make a grand sortie, under the command of M. d'Argencourt. This obliged all the troops, cavalry and infantry, composing the king's army, to be at their posts, in order to reinforce the lines, and repulse the sortie. Mirabeau failed not to be there with all the nobles that had accompanied him, and as they were not in sufficient number to form a squadron, the constable (Lesdiguières) who commanded and settled the posts, proposed to him to incorporate his followers with another troop of cavalry, to which he replied, 'that he had the honour to represent a city of too much importance to allow him to be attached to any other troops whatever; and he begged to have a post assigned to him where he might fight with all the nobles who had accompanied him.' The constable, pleased with the spirited reply, readily acceded to his request."—*Editor.*

of its adherents, among whom it was natural that the founders of the house should place themselves. Honorius died of apoplexy, in 1622. It is a remarkable fact, that he is the only one of the family after whose death an inventory was found, a proof of the praiseworthy union which cemented their domestic confidence.

Thomas, the son of Honorius II, was, as we have just stated, left at court. He married, early in life, a lady of a high and proud family, at least if we may judge from this expression used upon the occasion: "Magnificent Lord Pompey of Pontevès and de Buous, and Magnificent Lady Margaret de la Baume of Suze." These were the father and mother in law of Thomas. He became his own master at a very early age, made the campaigns in Italy, and lived in great splendour. He was the first who introduced liveries * at Marseilles, where he lived in a splendid and expensive style. At his death his affairs were found in a very deranged state. This was the first and necessary consequence of the notions he imbibed during a life spent at court. He nevertheless rendered some essential services to his family by the manner in which he brought up and settled his numerous children, consisting of six sons and three daughters. His two eldest sons were educated at Paris,

* His liveries were red. My great grandmother has heard it stated by old persons, that the people used to call as the servants passed, "Come and see the Marquis of Mirabeau's Swiss soldiers." —*Note by Mirabeau.*

and the four youngest became knights of Malta during their minority *.

The troubles which broke out during the regency of Anne of Austria, agitated Marseilles as well as the rest of the kingdom. Our family embraced the royal cause. Thomas, and his son Honorius, were both wounded during a tumult at the town-house. Shortly after these events, the young king made his entry at Marseilles, and ordered the erection of a citadel, now called Fort St. Nicolas. During his sojourn in the town, he occupied our house in the Place Lenche, with the Queen-Mother and Cardinal Mazarin. As it was resolved that Marseilles should henceforward be reduced to the condition of a purely commercial city, the consulate was abolished, and the office of alderman established. It was also ordered that the first alderman should always be chosen from the body of traders. This change in the constitution was the cause of the removal of our family, and of nearly all the nobles, from Marseilles. The king, during his stay, granted his letters patent, erecting the estate of Mirabeau into a marquisate; but the formalities of registering not being complied with, it was only twenty-five

* We have not found in the archives of our family any proofs made in that order anterior to those furnished by Francis de Riqueti, the eldest of these four knights; nor is this to be wondered at, since it was at the chapter general of 1583 that the priors of Malta first received orders to keep archives, and this regulation did not take effect before the chapter general of 1631.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

years after that the final ceremony took place under our great-grandfather Honorius III.

This Honorius III was a man of great talents. Firm, sagacious, and able, he was called the Solomon of the country. He was born in 1622, and his father dying in 1672, he became, when fifty years of age, the chief of the house. He found the family property heavily encumbered with large engagements, and charged with the payment of numerous portions to brothers, all of whom were of hasty tempers, and men of extraordinary character. Honorius III retired with his family to Mirabeau, where he spent several years, living with the strictest economy. Fortunately for him, he had the consolation of study, the best support in adversity, offering not only great enjoyments, but an occupation worthy of the nature and destiny of man. Honorius found his chief delight in the study of Tacitus, whose precepts no doubt taught him to become a good citizen. He had borne arms in Italy, in Catalonia, at the raising of the siege of Turin, at the sieges of Collioure and Perpignan, at the battle of Lerida, at the taking of the towns of Villeneuve, Ast, and Trin, and had been wounded several times.

Even at this period, public services had no longer anything of that which I should term filial and pious. Badly constituted monarchies tend to make disaffected subjects. In absolute governments, the higher orders only can bear arms, or become servile courtiers. The city of

Marseilles, in its subjugated state, no longer offered any opening for public services. Provence had a peculiar constitution, and our ancestors, though engaged in the administration of Marseilles, had occupied themselves with the affairs of the different bodies composing our municipal corps. Honorius II, the grandfather of Honorius III, was several times syndic of the nobles. This latter was at Mirabeau, living in that close retirement which the welfare of his family imperiously demanded, when, in 1678, he was elected first procurator of the province. He left his retreat, and appeared at the head of his province in a very becoming manner. His wife was highly accomplished, and had great dignity of manner. They came to reside at the town-house of Aix with a considerable retinue. Their popular behaviour delighted the middle classes, and the state in which they lived commanded respect. It is easily conceived that a man of such talents did not, at the age of fifty-six, consider that these brilliant appearances were to be kept up merely for show. His prudence and firmness were to be put to many trials, and indeed these distinctive qualities were already known. At an assembly of the nobles, M. Delamolle, a counsellor in Parlement, having insulted the Marquis of Oraison, then one of the notables of the province, Honorius de Riqueti, though known for his moderation, said unhesitatingly that " all the nobles of the long robe ought to be driven away;" and lifting up his cane, would have administered

justice after the fashion of the times, if M. de Cormis had not prevented the blow by placing himself before Honorius. This anecdote became generally known, and after that time no person appeared robed at the assemblies of the nobles.

A man of this stamp, placed at the head of affairs, necessarily became their chief director. Times and circumstances demanded a powerful and sure arm. This was the most brilliant period of the reign of Louis XIV, if we are to judge by the splendour of his court, the display of a large army and a numerous fleet, and the prodigious efforts which this monarch made. But it was in reality the period when the greatest discontent reigned throughout the provinces. The system of Colbert, whose plan was to tax every thing, destroy every privilege, every conventional usage and long-established custom, made the whole kingdom, and more particularly the maritime provinces, swarm with fiscal agents, despotically protected. Such functionaries are objects of horror and detestation in every country in the world. During the long reign of Louis XIV, which attacked and annihilated old customs, the fiscal system took deep root; but it was impatiently tolerated by the generations that had tasted of liberty and had lived in troubled times. The inhabitants of Provence, ever tyrannised over, have never been patient; when discontented and oppressed, they only waited for an opportunity to exterminate the

custom-house and tax agents, and those whom they have always termed "partisans." A favourable opportunity offered, as they thought: they were informed that the Duke of Savoy had entered Dauphiny and was proceeding to Provence. A rising immediately took place in the province, and disturbances broke out in the town of Aix. Honorius de Riqueti ran to the Intendant, Rouillé de Meillan—

"Fly, Sir," said he, "fly instantly, and I will be answerable to the king for the city and province. In an hour, it will be, perhaps, too late; if once the people commit a crime, there will no longer be any possibility of keeping them within bounds."

The intendant yielded to these representations and escaped over the roofs of the houses. The numerous agents of the excise disappeared, and the procurators of the province assumed the reigns of government.

The chief then courageously demanded of the mutineers "whether they wished to become subjects of the Duke of Savoy?" The inhabitants of Provence entertained a deep hatred to this troublesome neighbour, who always aimed at extending his dominions. This question, repeated among the people, struck them with dismay, and rendered them docile. The ambitious progress of the Duke of Savoy being arrested by the small-pox, with which that prince was attacked, he did not enter Provence, where, in the event of such invasion, all the provosts had received orders to lay waste

their territory, and yield to the enemy's soldiers nothing but a desert without provisions. For this the governor of the province promised the inhabitants an adequate indemnity.

Things were in this state when the French troops made their appearance. The regiment of Hamilton had received directions to chastise the city of Aix. The commander found the gates closed, but the procurators went out to receive him. The Count of Hamilton, ignorant of the constitution of the county, did not form a very high opinion of these gentlemen; for the military had already learned to look down upon the municipal authorities. He asked Honorius de Riqueti, in a haughty tone, by what right he had closed the gates of the town against the king's troops.

"Young man," replied the first procurator, "lower your tone, I beg; and recollect that with a single sign I could bring out twenty thousand men who would answer for me. Your soldiers shall enter, but only by my orders. As for yourself, my house shall be your quarters, and in the course of a couple of hours, you shall inform me to which of us two you think the tone of command you have assumed, most properly belongs."

The three battalions were conducted to the great square, through streets lined with people. Billets were then distributed, and the arms of each company placed at the quarters of its captain. These officers were too well provided for to become troublesome. The colours

were carried to the town-house, where the Count of Hamilton perceiving the high respect which Riqueti universally inspired, became a devoted courtier to the Marchioness of Mirabeau. His regiment was everywhere perfectly well received, and things passed off peaceably.

At the end of the year, the first procurator of the province proposed to the Provincial Assembly, which supplies the place of the States, not to deliberate upon any levies for that year, on account of the extraordinary expenditure incurred for the troops, and the succours due to the mountain provostships. Fortunately, Cardinal Grimaldi, Archbishop of Aix, a benevolent and worthy prelate residing in the province, to which he was particularly attached, opposed nothing that could be conducive to its interests. The proposal was agreed to with firmness, but without acclamations. Honorius returned the insignia of his office more honoured than he had received them, and being required to give an account of his conduct, repaired to court and succeeded in obtaining the king's approbation of all his actions.

Towards the close of his life he rendered another important service to the city of Marseilles. In 1686, the inhabitants having suffered from various grievances, deputed him to lay their claims before the king. Riqueti proceeded to court, where being received in an unbecoming manner by the young and haughty de Seignelai, he said to him,—

"I see, Sir, that it is better to treat directly with the king than with his servants. I shall therefore go to his majesty."

At that time such a thing was possible; this is not the case now, and will never, perhaps, be so again in France. M. de Seignelai was alarmed, called back the negociator whom courtly impertinence could not abash, and gave a favourable answer to Riqueti's application. Honorius then returned to his native city, where he died at the close of 1687, at the age of sixty-five years, universally beloved and respected *.

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* Honorius intended to have written his memoirs.

"I have in my possession a manuscript in the hand-writing of our respected grandfather, which contains nothing more than the dates of successive events, in notes so short that I can make no use of them. All that I can make out is, that he was preparing a history of the late domestic troubles at Marseilles, in which the party of our house took so conspicuous as share, since it was that party which opened the gates to the king, as our grandfather's grandfather had done to Louis XIII, and his great grandfather to Charles IX. He was so much an eye witness of these events, that he was wounded at the town-house, as also was his father, on the same day. A history of this decription, written by the wisest man of his time (for such was his reputation), a man whose only books, after those of Holy Writ, were Thucydides, Tacitus, Machiavel, and some other historians—a man also of weight and authority, entirely broken in to public business, would no doubt have been extremely valuable, notwithstanding the apparently small importance of the subject, when compared with that of other histories. But it is the pen which gives the merit to an historical work, not the extent of the subject. The conspiracy of Venice, by the Abbé de St. Real, and that of Giovanni di Fiesco, by Cardinal de Retz, will both of them always be considered master-pieces. I am therefore sorry that the work in question did not appear, as it

Before I mention John Anthony, the son of Honorius III, and the principal subject of these memoirs, I shall say a few words respecting his uncles, the brothers of Honorius.

Of five brothers, four of whom outlived him, Francis was the first and only one of the family ever intended for holy orders. Wild, dissipated, and thirsting for independence, he would never adopt any fixed pursuit. His brother, a captain in the guards, of whom I shall speak hereafter, obtained for him, during the time he was in favour, the reversion of the bishopric of Digne, and informed him at the same time that the only thing required of him would be to spend three months at the ecclesiastical seminary, to prepare himself for holy orders. He coolly replied, "that if fate destined him to wear the mitre, it must fall perpendicularly

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would have conferred celebrity upon my grandfather, and enriched literature. Take care that your descendants do not some day complain thus of your own memoirs, which you always defer to a more convenient opportunity. I know that time is necessary; but a man like you is always master of his mind, so that you can take advantage of any quarter of an hour to employ in matters very foreign to those you are about. I am coming to this point; and it is easy for you to reach it in a single leap. Scipio had greater occupation than you. I think you must admit this: for the life of a private individual, in a republic, is more complicated than that of a man in office under a monarchy. Nevertheless, he guided Polybius, wrote comedies for Terence, and said that he was never more occupied than when he had nothing to do."—(Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 9th, 1754.)—*Editor.*

upon his head, during his studies at Marseilles, otherwise he should decline it." This system did not, as may be supposed, lead him on to fortune; and he remained at his own home, to the ruin of which he mainly contributed.

The second of the five brothers of Honorius III, named also Francis de Riqueti, was a knight of Malta, and distinguished himself in his youth by an act of daring intrepidity. His mother, Anne of Ponteves de Buous, was one day outrageously insulted by the chevalier de Griasque, a well known bully.

"Scoundrel!" she exclaimed, placing the muzzle of a pistol to his head, "I would blow your brains out, but that I have children who will avenge me in a more honourable manner."

This act of violence produced a collision between the two parties to which each belonged, and the gates of the city were closed. A ship, which at this moment set sail for Malta, carried with it the news of the quarrel. Francis, who had not yet attained his seventeenth year, and was sowing his wild oats, immediately proceeded to Marseilles, and without stopping to call on his mother, went directly to the chevalier de Griasque, who on accepting his challenge, said to his friends—

"I am going to bleed a chicken."

They repaired together to a garden, and this chicken, having locked the doors, threw the keys over the wall, and slew the boasting chevalier.

This Francis de Riqueti was the only one of his family undistinguished by talent or vivacity; but, on the other hand, he was quick at resenting any personal attack, even when merely a youth. In the heat of a discussion, he struck the general of the galleys, the nephew of the grand master of the order, and jumping overboard, swam to a ship which, fortunately for him, was at that very moment setting sail. He was then degraded, and though afterwards restored to the order, he lost his seniority, and consequently never took the vows, but was always known as the commander Mirabeau. He became captain of the galleys of France, and afterwards major and inspector of that corps, and retained the place of inspector even beyond the usual term, thanks to his eccentricity. Having learned that M. de la Jouquière, who did not belong to the corps, had been appointed inspector of the galleys, Francis, providing himself with a cane of immense dimensions, appeared constantly in public with this weapon shouldered as a musket, and when asked the reason of this singular proceeding, he replied—

"It is because I expect my superior officer at parade."

M. de la Jouquèire did not think fit to expose himself to the striking arguments of this unmannerly logician, and Francis de Riqueti continued to fulfil the duties of inspector.

This singular man was extremely economical, and

from the great favour he seemed to be conferring when he granted the merest trifle, he passed for being very avaricious. He had laid by the greatest part of his pay, and had probably realised some property in his piratical excursions, in which the Maltese youth of those days not unfrequently indulged. He lived with his sister, Madame de Puget*, in a house they had jointly built, her share of which she bequeathed to him at her death. Honorius III was also dead, and his widow found means to conciliate for her children the good graces of the rough-tempered Francis. Every year she brought him the receipt for her pension, which he however took care not to pay, his real motive being to increase his inheritance for the benefit of his nephews. Our grandfather, John Anthony, of whom we shall presently speak, used jestingly to accuse himself of having, in the following manner, involuntarily inveigled Francis to leave him his fortune. During one of the brief sojourns which his duty allowed him to make at Marseilles, he found his uncle dangerously ill, and obliged to undergo an operation. It was successful, and Francis felt much relieved. The nephew, drawing four louis from his purse, presented them to the surgeon. The old gentleman, economical, and a Provençal in the fullest sense of the word, was so surprised at this generosity, that he exclaimed:

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* Joan de Riqueti, married April 11th, 1643, to Francis de Clapius, Lord of Pujet.—*Editor.*

" That child indeed loves me; no other shall have my fortune;" and at his death he made him his heir.

The third brother of Honorius de Riqueti, Thomas Albert, was a man of great talent, but of fiery temper. He was a knight of Malta, and a captain in the navy. In the latter capacity, he cruised with his brother Francis against the Spaniards, with whom France was at war, hoisting the Maltese flag whenever he fell in with a Turkish vessel. A prosecution ensued against him, as also against Captains Forbin and Clapiers, who pursued the same course, mingling with it a little piracy. A copy of the proceedings is in the archives at Mirabeau.

This circumstance did not cool Thomas Albert's ardour for adventures. It was he who conducted to the castle of Mirabeau the wife of the constable de Colonne, and her sister, the beautiful duchess of Mazarin, when they fled from their homes, and went about the country like two heroines of romance. "*Poi fuimo a Mirabello*" (we then went to the château of Mirabeau) says Madame de Mazarin, in her Memoirs; but she does not say what they did there. The tradition of the country relates that the persons whom her husband sent in pursuit of her, and who were bearers of the king's order, at a period when passive obedience was not altogether a law, happened to arrive on a Saturday evening, at the hour of the Angelus, when it was customary to ring all the church bells. They were so startled at the wildness of the scene, the rocks, the mountains, the

embattled towers, the reputation of the masters of the castle, and what appeared to them the sounding of the alarm bell, that they crossed themselves, and fled precipitately to their boats, leaving their mission unaccomplished. It was, however, indispensable that the fugitives should quit the kingdom, and the frontiers were guarded. The Chevalier de Beaumont (such was the title borne by Thomas Albert de Riqueti), aided by his brothers and friends, found no other expedient than that of breaking the chain of the port of Marseilles. A criminal prosecution was the consequence of this action, but the Chevalier got off with flying colours. He was afterwards appointed Grand Prior of Toulouse*, of which office however he did not take possession, on account of his death, occasioned by the rupture of a blood-vessel, whilst breaking in a horse. This horse, which he bequeathed to his family, was the only gift they ever received from him†.

* In 1690 he obtained this appointment, because La Hilière Polastron, grand commander, did not take it, as he wished to retain his own office, which enabled him the better to annoy the grand master, whom he mortally hated.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

† There is a singular anecdote concerning this horse, which may give an idea of the military vigour of the Marquis of Mirabeau, and show the difference between the gymnastics of those days and those of our own times. This vicious horse was sent to our grandfather, John Anthony, then at Arles: the beast was brought with blinkers and heel-ropes. The horse having rested, my grandfather ordered it to be taken, saddled and bridled, to the course outside the town. Having sprung upon the saddle, the grooms took off the ropes and

Louis de Riqueti, the youngest of the five brothers, died at Malta, aged only nineteen years. He had there been engaged in piratical excursions against the Turks; a very common practice in those days. Such was the school in which Tourville and other celebrated naval commanders were formed.

The fourth brother, Bruno, whom I have reserved for the last in this biographical sketch, was the most singular character of them all, and rendered himself the most conspicuous. He survived all his brothers, became a knight of Malta, and his adventures were as extraordinary as they were numerous.

Towards the close of his life he lived very retired. As a man of taste, he admired the works of Port Royal, but hated the Jesuits, who enjoyed such high favour under Louis XIV. He seemed for mere amusement, to indulge in his sarcastic turn of

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the blinkers. The animal felt its master, trembled, became alarmed, and prepared for a plunge. On one side were the city walls, on the other the Crapone canal, as broad, at least in this place, as the canal of Languedoc. The vigorous and enraged animal sprang forward and cleared the canal. More than fifty years after the place was shown, and the fact related as a prodigy. Neither the horse nor his rider fell. There was a ploughed field on the other side. In vain did the horse try to bite, rear, and roll upon the ground. The animal was of elegant form, and the excellent rider of a height which gave him immense command, and possessed of strength which overcame that of the beast, forced the latter to moderate its violence, walk through the furrows, and take every sort of pace. The horse soon became obedient, and as renowned for its good qualities as for its beauty.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

mind; it was therefore difficult to determine the objects of his hatred, or of his predilection. But he appeared to pride himself upon his dislike to the order of Loyola, and asserted that his aversion commenced from the time when, having run away from home, he was taken by two of these reverend fathers, and conducted by them from Avignon to Paris, as if he had been their servant. Whether this anecdote be founded in truth or not, the clever and spirited youth soon made himself known. He was introduced at Madame de Venelle's, whose house was the ready asylum of every Provençal. This lady had been governess of Cardinal Mazarin's nieces. The king, scarcely emerged from boyhood, had found her invulnerable against the attacks of his youthful gallantry, and he conceived great esteem for her on account of that very severity, for which, at a later period, Madame de Navailles incurred his displeasure. Madame de Venelle was appointed under-governess to the royal children of France, and became the patroness of every native of Provence.

Bruno de Riqueti was presented at court under the title of the Chevalier de Villebonne, the name he bore in the family. Lively, active, and brave, of the same age as the king, he soon gained the friendship of the young monarch, who admitted him as a companion in all his exercises, and presented him with an ensigncy in his guards. I have heard it related by old men who had themselves heard it from their seniors in age, that

he surpassed his youthful master in the exercise of leaping, and, like a true Provençal, would never listen to the courtly advice of those who wished him to humour the king, by knocking down at least one hat from a heap, placed upon a stick, which the young monarch could never succeed in clearing. Had this been his only failing, he might have run a brilliant career, for he was distinguished by great and dazzling qualities,—the most brilliant valour, great natural talents, an athletic frame, and a daring spirit, which not unfrequently carried him beyond the bounds of propriety, but which, even during this reign, as well as at other periods, was often attended with success. He possessed the art of a commander, and indeed every military accomplishment. These personal endowments were more than sufficient to lead him to the pinnacle of fame and fortune; but he could not curb his unruly temper, and his actions were sometimes those of a madman. A lofty spirit is no doubt requisite, but his carried him always too far.

When he entered the guards, that corps, open to the middle classes of Paris, was not much sought after by the military nobles. The Duke of Lafeuillade, one of the king's favourites, was colonel of the regiment, which he was desirous of placing upon a higher footing, and he felt honoured in having under his command such a man as the Count of Mirabeau, a title which Bruno had assumed. Bruno married Catherine Forest, the

lady of Vaugien, a rich widow, who brought him the beautiful estate of Vaugien. He had always been a great favourite with the fair sex, who, however, feared him, and twice he narrowly escaped being poisoned. He rose in his regiment without purchase; but in consequence of disputes at court, in which some ladies of the highest rank were implicated, he was sent from his corp to command detachments at Lille and at Nancy, and was kept at these places for a considerable time. At Nancy, he allowed his beard and nails to grow to a great length, as a sign of mourning for the disgrace into which he had fallen. The king, who entertained a lively friendship for him, and over whom he had acquired, in his peculiar way, a species of ascendency, at last forgave him all his follies. The number and nature of those which have been related to me surpass all belief. I will only mention what occurred one day at Versailles. Having pursued with blows one of the servants of the palace, termed "blue men," (valets wearing embroidery, who waited in the apartments at the palace) to the very door of the king's closet, his majesty ordered the Duke of Lafeuillade to put Mirabeau under arrest. When the king's order was intimated to the Count, he refused to obey it, saying, that he would not be punished for having chastised an insolent valet; that he would go to the king's dinner, and the monarch could, if he pleased, give him the order himself. He accordingly appeared at the royal

table, and the king enquired of the duke of Lafeuillade why his command had not been obeyed. Upon the duke stating the fact we have related, the king, whose greatness of mind was as conspicuous as his goodness, said :—

" We have always known him to be a thoughtless, hair-brained fellow, therefore we must not ruin him !"*

The Count's impetuosity and cynical candour, however, were not altogether without dignity. The following characteristic anecdote has been preserved by M. Thomas in his essay on eulogies. At the inauguration of the pedestrian statue of the Place des Victoires, that masterpiece of adulation by the Duke of Lafeuillade, and that monument, at the same time, of the king's weakness for every thing that evinced splendour, the Count of Mirabeau, crossing the Pont Neuf at the head of the guards, presented arms before the statue of Henry IV, exclaiming:—

" My friends, let us salute this one—he is fully as good as the other."

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* During his campaigns he lost his wife, and the marriage settlement, by which she had conferred upon him the estate of Vaugien, being deficient in a certain formality, through the rascality of a lawyer who was in connivance with her family, he lost the property. He represented to the king that he had been ruined in his Majesty's service. The formality alluded to was new; the king therefore ordered a negociation to be set on foot with the family, who ultimately agreed to grant the Count a life annuity of 8,000 livres.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

The different offices he held, and several tontines in which he was interested, made him very wealthy at the close of his life. His second wife was Anne of Boulainvilliers, a lady of gentle lineage, and highly cultivated understanding, but who brought him no fortune. The motive that determined his choice partook of the same character of singularity which pervaded all his actions.

The conversation turned, one day at a party, upon the ladies of honour of Madame (the king's sister). The Count of Mirabeau, whose satirical wit was an inexhaustible mine of anecdote, amused the company with stories upon this fertile subject. A lady present, who was a stranger to him, contradicted him, but with great mildness, and in a manner that tended to enhance the conversational talents of the Count. The ladies of Maubeuge, a country frequently occupied by the military, and a resort of the fashionables of the day, were next the objects of Bruno's attacks. The lady defended them against their witty adversary, but always in a temperate and obliging manner. The fair apologist having at length withdrawn, Mirabeau learnt that the person with whom he had been arguing, was no other than Mademoiselle de Boulainvilliers, a canoness of Maubeuge, and formerly lady of honour to Madame. Surprised and confused, he vowed he would offer his hand to this gifted young lady, and he kept his word.

After a long military career, during which he commanded the guards for a considerable time, he at length got tired of the service, in consequence of a severe wound he received at the battle of St. Denis, where his regiment particularly distinguished itself.

"I have had enough of it," he exclaimed, "this shall be my last."

Notwithstanding this resolution, he remained fourteen years longer in the army, always distinguishing himself by his bravery and loyalty. He was promoted to the government of Quesnoi, the titular governor of which was supposed to be dead; but such not being the case, Mirabeau retired from the service without the usual promotion. He, however, commanded universal respect, for, notwithstanding his eccentricities of temper, his superior qualities had gained him many friends. Marshal de Villars was one day asked, how it was possible that so sensible a man as he was could be on terms of friendship with so extraordinary a character.

"That madman," he replied, "possesses qualities rarely found among wise men."

He lived to the age of ninety-three, having retired to Provins, a small town, in the neighbourhood of which he had purchased an estate. He left an only daughter, who married the Marquis of St. Micaud, a nobleman of Burgundy, at that time colonel of the regiment of Bourbon. The pride, the fiery temper,

and the eccentricities of this singular but brilliant man, formed a bad example for my grandfather, naturally dazzled by the superior qualities of a person who was in a manner his patron and mentor. My grandfather served at first in the Mousquetaires, and was, therefore, under the guidance of the Count of Mirabeau. Madame d'Estoublon, my grandfather's sister, a very superior woman in every respect, and who sincerely loved him, used to say of her uncle, with reference to her brother—

"That Parisian madman has spoiled him."

Having spoken successively of the brothers of Honorius III, I have now only to talk of his son, and their nephew, John Anthony, our grandfather, who henceforward will be the sole object of these memoirs.

John Anthony de Riqueti was born on the 29th of September, 1666. His elder brother having died in minority, he became chief of the family at the early age of twenty-one.

His father, Honorius III, had been carefully educated at Paris, but did not follow the same plan for his sons. His college studies, he said, had not been productive of any benefit to him; and that was, in his opinion, a sufficient reason for adhering to the prejudices of the times, when manly exercises alone were considered the proper education for young nobles, and an intercourse with society the best finishing school. John Anthony and his brother Hannibal consequently spent their

youth at Mirabeau, under the care of an excellent father, and of a mother in every respect worthy of him; but they had extraordinary examples before their eyes in the conduct of their uncles.

It is not without some difficulty that I can succeed in giving a methodical account of my grandfather's life. I have heard my father, and several of his contemporaries say, that he was not a man to be troubled with questions. His reputation, his services, his commanding figure, his rapid eloquence, his haughty demeanour, his virtues, and even his defects, inspired all around him with a certain awe. In spite of the urbanity of his manner, his quick and touchy temper made him feared. It was impossible to become familiar with him; even his children dared not, in his presence, yield to the impulse of filial affection*.

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* Some opinion may be formed of him from the following extract taken from the unpublished memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

"The stately manners of those days, since that period very much altered, will now appear very singular, when all is external, artificial, and affected, and a pretended sensibility has assumed the place of reasonable, solid, and judicious affection. I never had the honour of touching the flesh of this respectable man, of this excellent father, but whose innate dignity kept out of sight that kindness which was always felt without letting it appear externally. He made me leave my birth-place very abruptly at the end of 1729, on receiving the news of some review. I remember, that as I was about to begin my journey early in the morning, I

All that I have been able to learn respecting his early youth, is, that he served in the Mousquetaires

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was told that he was up, and I went to his room. As the carriage had not yet arrived, for fear he should become impatient, he made me continue the reading of a book on devotion, which a servant was reading to him when I entered. The moment the vehicle arrived, he suddenly stopped me—

" 'Here is the carriage, child,' said he, 'adieu! be prudent, if you would be happy:' and I left him as I should have done on any other day.

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" It was in 1729, whilst I was still a child, that I quitted my father's house. I returned, for the first time, to make an outfit, in 1733, after the siege of Kell, during the first war of Louis XV. I then saw very little of him. I recollect, that the day after my arrival, as he went very early to mass, he was gone before I could pay my duty to him. I met him on the course at Aix, as he was returning. I had on my best regimentals.

" 'Sir,' said he, 'when a man appears before any one to whom he owes respect, he leaves off his corporal's coat, which is no where in place but at the head of soldiers. Go, Sir, and take off that coat.'

" Neither my brothers nor I ever had regular conversations with my father. He took care, I think, to say good things in our presence, at least as much as in the presence of others; but he gave us few, if any, direct lessons. This was not necessary to inculcate his principles; for if it be true that *initium sapientiæ timor Domini*, he had inspired us with all that was necessary to make us good. And candidly speaking, if he had not been feared by his children, they would have enjoyed an especial privilege, for he was feared by every body else. I well remember that when at the academy, two hundred leagues distant from him, the thought of him alone made me tremble for the consequences of any youthful pranks likely to make a noise. And as, for want of an arm, he could not write, but made my mother write for him, I was so accustomed to dread his letters, that not only at this period, but forty years subsequently, I could

before the age of eighteen *, since he was in that corps at the siege of Luxemburg, undertaken at a period of profound peace, by order of the incendiary Louvois.

Nature had been singularly lavish in her gifts to this handsome young man. Tall, and remarkably well formed, his fine soldier-like countenance evinced the fire of his soul. Generous even to a fault, proud but humane, obliging, urbane, and frank, he was formed to attract general admiration, and his personal dignity justified it through life. The young men of that period were refractory and turbulent. The corps of the Mousquetaires, though the first military step of the

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never open a letter from my mother without a throbbing of the heart."—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* I have heard it related, that one day at a review, he was so cruelly pinched by new shoes, that he cut one of them with a razor; but no sooner had he partially liberated the captive foot than the red stocking formed a curious contrast with the leather. The king was very particular when he reviewed the troops. The young Mousquetaire got some ink, and thinking to blacken his stocking, produced only a deep blood colour. The king having arrived, my grandfather in confusion placed the heel of his right foot upon the toe of his left. Louis XIV. attentive to every thing, stopped, with all his retinue, and said:—

"Mousquetaire, you do not stand well under arms."

My grandfather was therefore obliged to place his feet properly, and the defect of the shoe became visible. The king's attendants began to laugh as loudly as the majesty of their master permitted. How many thus show their weakness by the very precautions they take to hide it!—*Note by Mirabeau.*

young nobles, and commanded by men of merit, under the immediate inspection of Louis XIV, who showed a great predilection for this regiment, formed nevertheless a very bad school, as a body composed entirely of young men must always be, more or less. This method of assembling young men together, and freeing them from all family restraint, is destructive of every principle of decorum, and is, in my opinion, the surest way of destroying civilization, which is the result of the natural progress of events, and of the combinations of powerful and lofty minds. My grandfather passed the ordeal without a taint. He well knew the danger, and has been frequently heard to say—

"I would rather strangle my children than place them in the Mousquetaires."

He was in his youth of a lively turn, and had great vivacity of temper; but he was proof against the usual seductions of gaming, wine, and gallantry. At this period, supper parties consisted of men only, and although he could bear the effect of wine, it did not agree with his constitution. He never indulged, even during his convivial moments, in anything beyond an innocent frolic, to which indeed his natural flow of spirits sufficiently disposed him, without any other means of excitement.

I have heard many singular anecdotes of him, but they were always of a lively and agreeable turn, never indicative of unkind feelings. Hearsay anecdotes

are always exaggerated, and as this extraordinary man became more daring and original as he grew older, the stories related of him and of his uncles made such an impression, that by the time my father entered society, our family had acquired as much celebrity for bold eccentricities, as Roquelaure had gained notoriety for his witticisms, with this difference, that the dignified manners of the Riqueti not only won esteem, but commanded respect.

I have said that Honorius III died in 1687. He left all his property to his widow, on condition she disposed of it in favour of the child whom she should deem the most deserving. And at the same time he directed a general entail of the property. His high-minded widow proved herself worthy of the trust. Without availing herself of the advantages which the will gave her, she allowed things to take their natural course; and while she lived with the strictest economy, her eldest son, whose dignified bearing gave an air of greatness to all his actions, was enabled to appear at Paris, and in his corps, in a manner suitable to his rank.

His younger brother, Hannibal, a knight of Malta, was of a mild and steady disposition. He served on board the galleys, at that time a very distinguished service. The presents of his uncles and aunts gave him a handsome competency, and he was supposed to be very rich, because he joined to the greatest possible

order, an inexhaustible fund of generosity. He lived in the best harmony with his impetuous brother, and the family enjoyed the greatest prosperity.

My grandfather served four years in the Mousquetaires. In 1689, the year in which his father died, the war broke out and lasted till the close of the seventeenth century. At the peace of Nimeguen, in 1678, the king had disbanded the whole of the cavalry, with the exception only of one company in each regiment, which preserved the regimental colours. It became, therefore, necessary to obtain men and horses, and commissions for levying companies of cavalry were granted to young men of noble families. My grandfather's company was incorporated with the regiment of Besons, and as the choice of colonels was dictated by birth and merit, seven of his friends afterwards obtained the command of regiments in the same year that he did. He levied his company in Provence. Requiring forty men, he chose them from among eighty of the farmers on his own estates, who voluntarily offered themselves; and of those forty, eleven were afterwards promoted to the rank of officers. Whether this was owing to a greater love of military glory then prevalent in France, or whether the people were less poor, or the youth of those days less eager for lucrative but sedentary employment, I am unable to determine, but I am inclined to think that these three causes contributed to produce this military feeling.

Louis XIV was still in the meridian of his glory.

prancing chargers, they indulged in sallies of youthful mirth and levity. Bondy, raising his head, and in a stern tone of command, which they had never seen him assume, exclaimed—

"Silence, gentlemen! Fall back into the ranks. I must be able to see right and left."

The tone, the gesture, and the unusual manner assumed by this officer, overawed the young boasters. They silently obeyed his command, and riveted their attention upon the weather-beaten face hitherto considered unworthy of notice, but which now assumed the steady, dignified, and imposing appearance calculated to fix the fortune of the day. A very short time after, Bondy called the major to him—

"Pleinsève," said he, "mount your white horse, and repair instantly to the gilded troop* you see yonder. Keep as close as you can to the general. You will shortly hear a demand for cavalry; you will then throw up your hat into the air. Do you understand me? Be quick—I shall keep my eye upon you."

The circumstance occurred, just as his experience had foreseen. The signal agreed upon was given. This officer, who appeared scarcely able to bear his breast-plate, threw his cloak over one of his shoulders, and his whole person assumed a commanding and martial appearance.

"Now, then," he cried, "sound the kettle-drum;"

* The staff.

and advancing with his men, he arrived, just at the proper time, on the very spot where his assistance was wanted. Our troops were worsted. This old and skilful officer arrested the pursuit of the enemy, and in the evening, Bondy and the brigade of Besons were the only subjects of conversation at head-quarters. Our young heroes, proud of belonging to the corps, but feeling confused at the praises bestowed upon them, repaired to their veteran and worthy commander, to whom they knew all the merit was due; they found him as before the engagement, cold, sedate, and inflexible. They now knew, however, how to appreciate his worth, and from that time always paid him the greatest deference and respect. It is thus that during active military service, as at any other time, or even perhaps more than at any other time, true merit is always modest: it waits for an opportunity of showing itself, and seizes it when it occurs, but without ostentation, frequently allowing the meed of success to be enjoyed by vain-glorious boasters. The young French nobles at all times display military spirit; at this period they were eminently military, and distinguished for their courage and greatness of mind. My father has given but few particulars relative to the early services of my grandfather *, who speedily acquired the reputa-

* During his campaigns he was always in the hottest of the fight; but this man, so magnanimous in everything he did, never spoke of himself. War was the constant theme of his conversation,

tion of being one of the best officers of his day; and indeed nobody appeared better qualified for a soldier's life. Active, brilliant, eager, indefatigable, he seemed never to require sleep; fearless even to excess, his vigilance was unparalleled. A smile of daring played upon his features amid the most appalling dangers. Kind and generous towards his soldiers, dignified with his officers, but harsh and severe towards the negligent, his men were his own, and his only; indeed, every corps became his when he was seen at its head. His first campaign was an earnest of his future fame. He, however, wrote nothing in his retirement, on account of the loss of his right arm. We know only that he was continually going to war, according to the received expression of the day; that is to say, in order to learn his profession, he accompanied the most skilful officers in their detached expeditions*. These commis-

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according to the fashion of the times, but he previously apologised to the ladies for introducing the subject—a sort of compliment which always excited my astonishment, for I could imagine nothing more agreeable than those animated and glowing descriptions. To speak the truth, his eloquence, though rather overbearing for others, when his vivacity got the better of that urbanity which was the characteristic of the manners of those days, was so brilliant and dignified, that his house was the evening resort of people who came for the sole purpose of listening to him.—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

* Light troops were then unknown; they first came into use a long time after. When Louis XIV, who had no less than 500,000 men, raised two or three regiments of hussars, it was

sions for going to war in detachments were in the gift of the general, and my grandfather was extremely anxious to participate in them. It was in these expeditions that we were accused of always attacking the Germans with inferior numbers. These detachments frequently displayed the utmost rashness, and the generous-minded Turenne was always ready to support them against public malevolence, ever eager to vituperate those who suffer themselves to be beaten.

"It is my own fault," this great man would say; "I ought to have known that there would be, at that spot, a stronger detachment of the enemy. But I know the

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merely to give an asylum and employment to some noble Hungarian exiles, whose insurrections he had instigated in order to create a diversion against the emperor. The "free companies," as they were called, were objects of contempt, as they made plunder their profession; and such troops never numbered among their ranks the youth of that period, who were neither given to marauding nor inclined to flee from the enemy. Lauzun, during his short-lived favour, had raised regiments of dragoons, and an attempt had been made to bring them into vogue by asserting that the service of both infantry and cavalry was learned in those corps. But though some general officers of reputation which they produced appeared to give weight to this opinion, the fact was never universally admitted. The duke of Vendome and Marshal Turenne both said, that when there were two regiments of dragoons in the army there was one too many, and they did not know what to do with it. But everything is changed now, everything has become light, and I should not be much surprised to see some day the soldiers of the heavy cavalry dressed in silk or dimity pantaloons, and mounted upon short-tailed ponies. —*Note by Mirabeau.*

commander of mine. He is a brave man, and I will give him an opportunity of taking his revenge *.

* Mirabeau relates elsewhere an anecdote, containing a most remarkable fact, which furnishes a proof of the admirable magnanimity of the great Turenne. "Marshal Choiseul related, that whilst he was colonel, he had the misfortune to absent himself for a short time, to attend to some love affair. It happened that while thus engaged, his regiment received orders to escort a convoy. The corps was attacked by the enemy, and particularly distinguished itself under the command of the lieutenant-colonel. This was an irreparable fault at that time, and must always be considered in that light. The regiment was ordered to join the army, and Choiseul followed quite in despair, with the resolution of immuring himself in the first convent of Chartreux he should find, when he received a complimentary letter from one of his friends, by which he learnt that M. de Turenne had said—

"'I had charged the Count of Choiseul with a secret mission, and thus deprived him of the opportunity of distinguishing himself; I am really very sorry for it.'

"The poor count came secretly, and fell, with tears in his eyes, at the feet of his second father, from whom any reproof would have been superfluous; and when this thoughtless youth became marshal of France, he related the anecdote. This is true tolerance and magnanimity. But mark how much the country gained by it: a general instead of a Carthusian monk." (*Advice to a young Prince, who feels the necessity of correcting his education*, by the Count of Mirabeau, 1788, pages 54, 55).

Let us add here two remarks, which redound to the honour of these illustrious individuals:—First. It was more than twenty years after the death of Turenne that the Count of Choiseul made this confession, which a more vain or less grateful man might have concealed altogether. Secondly, this same Count of Choiseul was nephew of the general who gained the battle of Rhétel, in 1650, the only one which Turenne ever really lost.

We shall add, that Thomas attributes a similar act of generosity

Besides these small detachments, excursions of greater magnitude were made, particularly in winter. If there had been but one Boufflers in Europe*, the army could never have been sure of a single month of repose. This indefatigable man, of iron frame, whose ambition made him aspire to everything, but above all to distinguish himself as a soldier—who owed his rise to his unwearied perseverance, zeal, and intrepidity, always set the example to his army, having adopted as his principle, that pain and death itself are the only legitimate objects of a soldier's ambition, and ought to prove his only end and aim. He used to say, with the utmost coolness, that at the close of a campaign, a soldier and his horse ought only to weigh eighty pounds, and a foot soldier twenty-seven pounds, including his baggage. This military exaggeration merely goes to prove, that with him no use could be made of the word impossible †.

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to Marshal Saxe, in the notes which follow his eulogy upon that warrior, page 418 of the second volume of the works of Thomas. Paris. Firmin Didot, 1822.—*Editor.*

* Louis François, Marshal and Duke of Boufflers, born in 1644, died in 1711.—*Editor.*

† This great man, for that title must be given to him who never deserved reproach, though he reached the summit of fortune, had already acquired high renown, by his vigorous defence of Namur. He commanded in Flanders, whence he continually harassed the enemy in their winter quarters, which always proved particularly distressing to the Germans. Indeed it was sometimes quite sufficient to disturb them, when they hoped to enjoy repose, in order to make them evacuate whole provinces, which was the case during the famous campaign of Turenne, in 1674. The Duke of Boufflers kept the

That spirit of independence and daring, which is the peculiar characteristic of the French youth, and so

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enemy always on the alert, and his young and ardent followers not less so. These were anxious to see service and earn distinction. When the Duke of Boufflers repaired to Paris or to court, they whose corps were stationed in the towns under his command, and thus liable to receive sudden orders, had their spies about his person, in order to be informed in time of his intentions. When he appeared at the opera, they did not feel secure before they had ascertained that there existed at his residence no indication of departure. In spite of these precautions, they were often deceived; for he used to travel with little or no baggage. Frost and snow seemed his natural elements. He made excursions into the remotest provinces of the Low Countries, and sometimes penetrated as far as Westphalia. The rapidity of his movements can only be compared to that of lightning. Forests, mountains, rivers, were no obstacles to him; and he always returned by another route. When his detachment came back to their quarters, to repair their losses and recruit their strength, he used to take leave of his companions, and jestingly say—

"I send you back to the ladies to seek repose, and your corps shall not move until the opening of the campaign."

But no sooner were they on the road to Paris, than they learnt that their general was gone, at the head of another detachment, to gather fresh laurels. What a cause for regret to those ardent young soldiers, burning with anxiety to distinguish themselves, and obliged to appear in town, to hear or to read in a person's looks remarks like the following:

"So! you could not wait until it was over!"

Such was the school in which the French youth learnt to become hardy and brave. It has since been asserted, and poets and other sycophantic writers, who have become the panegyrists of the manners of those times, have stated, that a luxurious life and its attendant pastimes, do not prevent Frenchmen from being ever brave and venturesome, at the first signal of war. Bold and brave I grant

eminently distinguished the young nobles of those days, formed too prominent and constitutional a feature in my grandfather's character for him not to have

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they are; but should valour itself be found with an enervated frame, which I deny, it is not the only quality required in war. Strength of body, patience to endure privations and hardships without murmuring; a contempt for comfort; a kind of love of fatigue; a wish to brave the inclemencies of the seasons, with that soldier-like resolution which makes those very hardships, as it were, their auxiliaries, while they are the tyrants of the rest of mankind:—such are the indispensable qualifications of true warriors. Unconquerable resolution, which is seldom the concomitant of an effeminate education, and the habits of a luxurious life, is not to be expected from our young men brought up in the arts, accustomed to frequent our theatres and other sinks of corruption, from our Sybarites in short, who know not how to appreciate others, nor to raise themselves in their own estimation; to whom neither example nor prejudice instil any desire of acquiring celebrity, or any notions of glory, which in the eyes of our modern town-philosophers is a puerile illusion. To the great advantage of the country, public opinion formerly rendered this pretended illusion a reality, during that period of life when the natural glow of youthful feeling gives soul and substance to every source of enthusiasm. Thus, although the competitors were numerous, and that state-canker, an excessive increase of regular troops, had created numberless offices in the army, really good commanders became from that period every day more rare.

It is, however, quite impossible to form any idea of the military spirit of those days, from that of our own times. Although Louis XIV had established order and obedience in every branch of the state; although Louvois had imparted to the administration of military affairs all the resources of his art, all the weight of his authority, and impetuosity of character, and the ascendency which he derived from the success and support of his master, who, better than any man, could say, "I WILL,"—although he had established an exact discipline, and, above all,

furnished his full share of singular and lofty actions, at a period which may be deemed the dawn of innovation. For instance, in order the more effectually to

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subordination among the officers upon whom the obedience of the privates depends, there still remained much sap and verdure, and the spirit of faction had given way to that of personal independence. It is true that oppression, superciliousness, and even covetousness, were no longer the characteristics of the military, but they were still licentious and overbearing. The king loved the army, and supported his officers when it was requisite, against the privileged and the formalists. For he felt how much he stood in need of officers of merit, and he knew how utterly impossible it was to make that man tremble before a police agent, who was to appear undaunted before the enemy. He wished to render the military submissive, but not to degrade them, and the reigning pedantry of the pen went for nothing in his system of managing such matters. A great general was considered the first man in the state, and the different ranks enjoyed a proportionate degree of respect. The truth is, the national genius, which may easily be corrupted, and subsequently destroyed, but which can never be forced, would not have borne more rapid modifications. The nobles were still proud, and would not have submitted to an idle residence, nor have conformed to servile deferences; in a word, they would not have tolerated those useless, ridiculous, and degrading minutiæ, which have since been considered the perfection of discipline. For instance, I have heard my grandfather say, that, in the whole course of his life, he never would be present at camps of peace, which always appeared to him no better than puppet-shows. It is well known that it would have been dangerous to propose to the officers of those days to wear uniforms, still less to fix the size of their horses or the length of their ruffles. The anecdote of the Marquis of Coetquen is well known. This nobleman, of a high family of Brittany, and the chief of a still powerful house, was cashiered at the head of his regiment by the king himself, who was reviewing it, and had ordered him to appear in uniform. The marquis said—

support the order which Louvois wished to establish in the army, that minister relied principally upon the introduction of the practice of inspection. By such means he certainly destroyed the long established abuses of sham soldiers *, and dead pay †. But the inspection was on that very account looked upon with

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"Fortunately, Sir, I still preserve the torn fragments!"—*Note by Mirabeau* [1].

* Interlopers in the profession, who appeared in the ranks only to pass muster, without being enrolled.—*Tr.*

† Soldiers who always remain in garrison, and never perform actual service.—*Tr.*

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[1] We have thought that these observations on the marked changes that have taken place within the space of only a few years, would appear interesting to the reader. We shall add to them three extracts.

"Who would have thought at that time, that they would succeed in rendering military spirit supple, and making it degenerate into a legionary spirit, to such a degree, that the general officers, and even the marshals of France should wear uniforms!"—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

"They have given a uniform to the general officers, without reflecting that this fantastical prerogative is an admission that the general officers are beings unknown to the soldiers. It is easy to foresee what confidence the soldiers will place in commanders who must be made known by a distinctive mark, without which the men would not recognise them."—*Essay on Despotism*, ed. 1775, p. 162.

"Forty years ago, an officer who appeared in the field of battle with his uniform would have been dishonoured. An officer not wearing his at the present day would be looked upon as a madman, independently of the penalty attached by the military code to his disobedience."—*Essay on Despotism*, p. 137.

the greatest jealousy. The persons who profit by these abuses are never those who oppose the greatest resistance, or complain the most; but they urge on the young men, especially such as are above the suspicion of being actuated by interested motives, and whose natural pride makes them consider a sacred prerogative every thing that bears the semblance of independence.

Louvois at first gave those commissions to old unflinching officers, whom he called his apostles. Though sold to his authority, they soon became weary of playing the part of scape-goats, and commissions were then issued, giving no other power than that of making a return of the effective members of the several corps. This duty was the employment of newly created functionaries. General officers, under the name of inspectors, exercised a jurisdiction over the number of the men and their discipline, but only during an annual review. Although supported by the minister, they were obliged at first to proceed with the utmost caution, as is shown by the well-known circumstance which occurred between M. de Santena and M. d'Artagnan, the latter of whom became afterwards Marshal Montesquiou. With regard to the commissioners, they remained for a length of time entirely distinct from the military, and were barely tolerated. A dignified submission to their scarcely acknowledged authority alone induced the officers to appear before them. This explanation was neces-

sary for comprehending the following anecdote, which certainly may be considered more than a practical joke.

One day my grandfather arrived at a review the very moment it was taking place. Alighting from his horse, he went directly to the Major, who instantly said to the Commissioner—

"There, Sir, is M. Mirabeau, whom I told you would not fail to be here in the course of the day."

The Commissioner replied, that he was very sorry, but his duty was to review the troops, and make a report of the men missing; that the troops had passed before him, and the captain was not present; that he had nothing to do with any other circumstance, and consequently the review was closed for M. Mirabeau, who would "be reported absent."

Mirabeau allowed the Major to plead his cause, and exclaim against the Commissioner's severity; but the inspecting officer, who strictly adhered to his instructions, refused to alter his decision. The young captain, who till then had remained silent, now approached the Commissioner, and with the utmost coolness said to him,—

"I am then, absent, Sir?"

"Yes, Sir."

"In that case this takes places during my absence:" so saying, Mirabeau attacked the Commissioner with his horsewhip, and gave him, in the middle of the parade, a singular dilemma to solve.

The banterers of the day were not in favour of the minister's men, and my grandfather willingly took upon himself the office of playing them all sorts of tricks. Marshal Maulevrier, who was his contemporary, relates of him, that being one day in the ante-chamber of M. de Saint Pouange, assistant to the war minister, La Chétardie, an old officer who had risen from the ranks, came from the ministerial closet. This veteran was a brave and estimable man, but a confidential servant of the Government, who had appointed him to the command of Old Brissac. He was, moreover, miserly, rude, and had been an "apostle," at the time the inspectors went by that name. My grandfather, who had the large eyes of his race, had a trick of entirely disfiguring himself by turning up his eyelids, and thereby changing his whole appearance in the most grotesque manner, so that no one could recognise him. Indeed, during these freaks no one would have suspected him to be the handsome man he really was. Having thus altered his appearance, he accosted La Chétardie, saying in a loud voice,—

"Good day, Mr. Commissioner; you have pulled us to pieces in a fine manner, in yonder closet, have you not?"

La Chétardie having cast his eyes upon the extraordinary countenance before him, and not recognising my grandfather, joined a group of officers, who, of course, took especial care not to divulge the trick.

" Do you know that person?" he inquired.

" No; he is certainly some fresh arrival, some Hungarian, or Hibernian."

Mirabeau thereupon advanced, and continued—

" After all, Mr. Commissioner, you follow there a very sorry employment."

" What does the man mean, with his Mr. Commissioner?" exclaimed La Chétardie, turning away; " the best thing I can do is to leave him to himself, for this is not a fit moment to answer him."

He then quitted the ante-chamber, and returning soon after, addressed my grandfather himself, who had pulled down his eye-lids, and turned the cuffs and facings of his great coat, which, according to the fashion of the day, were of different colours, asking him, " what had become of the ugly stranger."

Such pranks are seldom found allied to loftiness of soul and dignity of character; and this apparent anomaly was the peculiar characteristic of my grandfather. The same Marshal Maulevrier used to relate, that being one day at the Œil-de-Bœuf, with a great many officers, Father Lachaise passed by, followed by his courtiers. My grandfather asked his comrades who that person was.

" He is the king's confessor," they replied; and he knew it as well as they did.

" And why do people follow that priest?"

" Because all ecclesiastical preferment is his gift."

" Shall I show you how to address this priest?"

" You are again going to commit some folly?"

" Oh, no! you shall see."

My grandfather immediately accosted Father La Chaise with a reverential air; the latter, unaccustomed to be spoken to by men of Mirabeau's profession, but naturally polite and affable, stopt and listened to him.

" Reverend father," said my grandfather, " I have frequently waited upon you, but at my age, and following the profession I do, I cannot hope for a privileged admission. However, my brother, who resides at a great distance, and whose time is entirely absorbed by the duties of his sacred calling, has none but myself, on whom he can rely to bring him to the king's notice, through the channel of those persons who deservingly enjoy his majesty's confidence. He serves the church to the best of his abilities, whilst I serve his majesty in the army. It is for his superiors to give their testimony of his zeal, but it is my duty to place him under your especial protection, which I do the more confidently, because having nothing in his favour but his name and the services of his ancestors, he is entirely destitute of patronage."

" It is no doubt our duty to grant protection," replied the smooth-tongued Jesuit, who thought by the dignified and easy manner of my grandfather, that he

was speaking to some one well known to him—" Yes, Sir, your brother is a worthy person; all the accounts I have received are most favourable to him, and I shall feel great pleasure in submitting his claims to the king's consideration. I consider this my duty, Sir; but opportunities are so rare, and the number of applicants so great, that the king cannot do all he wishes. His majesty is perfectly aware that the merit being equal, the military services of those members of the family who have injured their fortunes in the army must necessarily have great weight in the distribution of his favours, and that meritorious officers, in their own disinterestedness, find themselves rewarded by the promotion of other members of their families. Such is the principle his majesty acts upon, and I shall be the first to induce him to apply it in favour of your brother when an opportunity offers."

" You promise me this, then?"

" I do, Sir, as soon as an opportunity occurs."

My grandfather now drew back, bowing in the most respectful manner. Those who had heard his speech assured him that he had said nothing but what every one said on similar occasions.

" And the answer?"

" Why, it was nearly the same that he gives to every body."

" Very well; but the fact is, I have no brother!"

And, indeed, he had no other brother than the Che-

valier Hannibal of Mirabeau, who was any thing but a poor curate, being at that time a lieutenant in the navy.

These youthful specimens of the character of a man who afterwards became so dignified, prove that turn of mind, free and sincere, which, united to undaunted valour, forms those superior beings destined to become the leaders of their fellow-men. My grandfather was one of these privileged beings, and the more deservedly so, because he never ordered any thing without first executing it himself, if there was the slightest danger or fatigue to undergo, or any sacrifice to be made, and because there was not a fault in him that did not proceed from some virtue. This was the well known compensation for his excessive impetuosity. M. D'Estoublon, his brother-in-law, once saved his life by merely pronouncing his name. They were entering the opera together through a passage, in which there was a barrier. Having met some friends with whom they promised to sup, my grandfather called back his servant to give orders respecting the wine to be taken to the place of meeting. The servant advancing too far, was on the point of passing the barrier, whilst his master was coming towards him. The serjeant on duty rudely repulsed the servant, and Mirabeau imprudently struck the serjeant with such violence as to knock him into the guard-house. Luckily, at the moment when the soldier cried "help!" D'Estoublon exclaimed—

" Ah ! Mirabeau, what have you done ? "

At these words the serjeant ordered his men in again, saying—

" Sir, you were on the point of being killed by the serjeant belonging to your uncle's company ! "

" My friend, I ask your forgiveness," replied my grandfather ; " but as you are a prudent man, never push back anybody, in the presence of a young madman ! "

Next day he sent the serjeant a handsome present, and the man would have sacrificed his life for him.

A daring spirit is truly odious when it is oppressive, and does not respect the rights of others, or tramples upon the weak, or those unable to defend themselves either on account of their sex, their age, their situation, or their means. It then degenerates into pride, a repulsive vice, or into insolence, a dastardly one. But when a spirit of this nature is allied to justice and generosity, the ordinary virtues of strong and fiery temperaments, it infallibly commands the love and respect of the lower orders, forming, it is true, the least brilliant portion of society—but, at the same time, the most useful. This courage, bordering upon rashness, was one of the characteristics of our family, and always made it beloved by the people. The two brothers, John Anthony and Hannibal, experienced this at Marseilles, under very critical circumstances, which may serve to illustrate the manners of

those times, a period at which it has been thought, and with good reason, that despotism had reached its climax. There existed in Provence a deep-rooted aversion for every person or thing connected with custom-houses, imposts, indirect taxes, and collectors. It may easily be foreseen, from what I have said respecting the commissioners and inspectors, that my grandfather was not one of those who submitted the most patiently to interrogatories and searches at gates, barriers, and passages. All these establishments, then new, were the oppressive results of the modern plan of fiscal revenue, and of the mercantile prohibitions adopted in favour of our own manufactories. These inventions by Colbert, (not, indeed, in the discovery of the system, but in making it the main stay of the state finances, and in enforcing its execution with all the power of government), these inventions, I repeat, to which habit had not yet reconciled the people, excited universal detestation. The king, however, protected them with the most unmitigated severity, and determined perseverance. He, himself, set the example of obedience, by allowing his own equipages to be searched; but the inquisitorial plan did not prosper the more.

My grandfather and his brother were at this period at Marseilles. A porter who wore the livery of the family, but was known to be a smuggler, was followed by the revenue officers, and sought refuge in the court of our house, whither the officers followed him. The

doors were immediately closed, and the servants being armed, attacked the officers. There were three of them, and they were cruelly beaten. When the doors were at last opened, and the poor devils allowed to go out, one of them fell down, nearly killed by a blow he had received on the head. This disturbance roused the populace; they cried out that the doors of the Marquis of Mirabeau's house had been forced, and they rushed through all the streets, uttering vociferations and threats, and shouting—

"Long live Mirabeau! Shall we throw them all into the sea?"

The public offices were closed; and in order to appease the tumult, my grandfather and uncle were obliged to leave the city, and seek refuge at Mirabeau. The excise officers immediately complained to M. Le Bret, then intendant. He promised a great deal, but did nothing. These complaints being made a second time, the intendant replied—

"Gentlemen, I have reflected that your establishment requires to be consolidated by time, and that personal quarrels ought particularly to be avoided. The Mirabeau family are highly connected, and are powerful in this province. They are more easily excited than appeased. I therefore am of opinion that the better way——"

The officers understood what he meant, and nothing more was said upon the subject in Provence. But my

grandfather, who had a peculiar talent for settling such matters in his own way, wrote a polite letter to M. Le Riche, farmer-general of the department, father of the elegant La Popelinière, who made himself so notorious by his extravagant and singular expenses, stating that if he heard anything more respecting the business, he would treat him in the same manner his men had been treated at Marseilles, the very first time he met him at the Opera. Le Riche sent this letter to M. de Barbezieux, for the farmers-general were not yet able to take the law into their own hands. When this minister, who was still young, saw my grandfather, he said to him—

"You must be satisfied with killing those people, without writing them threatening letters."

Was this excessive lenity? Perhaps so. However, men of my grandfather's stamp might be annihilated, but not subdued. They who possess unshaken perseverance of character, and seem even anxious to overcome impossibilities, are too valuable not to be held in great respect by true statesmen, and by princes desirous of achieving great things. An able general can preserve the nation only by means of a good army, and an army is only good when it possesses officers who spurn every species of subordination, except such as emanates from the stern dictates of duty and honour.

The quick and lively temper which my grandfather showed in his youth, and which was displayed under a

different form in his riper years, without ever leaving him, spurred him on with most extraordinary energy, in the various duties of his profession. He has been heard to remark, that a military man should always study and do the duty of the rank above him.

"There are men born to obey," would he observe; "others are born to command—two things perfectly dissimilar."

This sentence is by far more profound and true than the hackneyed aphorism, "that it is necessary to know how to obey, in order to learn how to command." He was truly one of those men who receive from nature the genius of command, but he was not blinded by presumption. He used often to say, that at the end of his two first campaigns, if he did not inwardly flatter himself, he should become as great a general as his two idols, Marshal Turenne and the Duke of Vendome; he thought at least that the science of commanding was not very difficult, and that with a well mounted staff, extreme vigilance, and unwearied attention in increasing the number of spies, and paying them beyond their hopes, he should be able to do as well as another; "but," he added, "when I had made ten campaigns, I had almost lost confidence in my own capacity."

This species of unrestrained freedom, so consonant with military manners, and of which I have related several instances, did not prevent men of great

capacity, who aimed at high military honours, from adopting early in life the tone of command; and in order to qualify themselves, they evinced the highest respect for fame honourably won, which supposes a lively emulation to acquire the same *.

* The slightest shades in this respect are invaluable, because they show the character of the age. My grandfather had a beautiful head of hair; nevertheless, at the age of five and twenty, he wore a wig, which appears the most extraordinary ornament of those days. His motive was to render his features more imposing by making himself look older. This sort of speculation would, at the present day, scarcely be tolerated in some youthful disciple of Esculapius, eager to get into practice. But we must call to mind the age which Louis XIV had then attained. That monarch, whom my father termed "the perfect model of the form of command," had for a length of time been the sole arbiter of the national opinion on all points, and he had reached that precise period of life when a commanding air, the natural effect of habitual dignity of deportment, attains its highest perfection, and becomes the only resource of a self-love naturally desirous of keeping up external advantages. It is sufficient to look at the portraits of Louis XIV from his childhood until past his thirtieth year, to see that he was the handsomest man in the kingdom, at a period when nature seemed prodigal of manly beauty, which indeed appears to be often the case under monarchs who entertain a marked predilection for this natural advantage. His countenance was, however, mild, and bore no expression of absolutism. On the triumphal arches, in the emblematical representations of him, on his monuments, and in his palaces, he was first painted, during his youth, with the features of the Apollo of Phidias, and afterwards the painters gave him an air of pride, with all its usual attendants. Henry IV and Gustavus Adolphus, in their portraits, appear to look at us just like other

I have heard my father relate an anecdote respecting a mistake on this head, made by his father, who told

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men; but there is not a doctor of Sorbonne, of the times to which I refer, or a burgher of Paris, whose portrait does not seem in the very act of uttering the *quos ego* of Virgil. It is observable even in the engraving of the good Lafontaine. It is quite vexatious to see half a profile, overshadowed with a tremendous wig, and a nose like that of a major, giving the word of command, at a battle against rats and weasels.

Thus, Louis XIV gave the character to his portraits and statues, and took it from them in return for his habitual attitudes. He was partial to a thick head of hair, and the company of hair-dressers are still proud of the privileges which this regulating monarch conferred upon them. At the age when man loses this advantage, he supplied its place with a wig, which at that period became an ornament before unknown amongst us—false hair having merely been made use of as a kind of border to the skull-caps used by bald people. The wig was necessarily made high, in order to harmonise with the expression of countenance the king wished to give himself; a power he always possessed to such a supreme degree, that with him there never was any appearance of art. He adopted an elevated nature as his guide, like a man who feels that he is always exposed to public view. Now, as vanity and affectation are awkward and displeasing, because they are wholly connected with self, so decorum and simplicity are graceful and elegant, because they relate to others. Whatever ridicule may have been since thrown upon every kind of etiquette and pomp, the harshest epithet applied to full-bottomed wigs, has been to call them antiquated. Indeed, it would be impossible to deny that this head dress is so perfectly in unison with the expression of Louis XIV, that it has become, as it were, part of the idea and recollections which we preserve of that prince. Every one, in his day,—rivals, detractors, friends, enemies, all received his nod as law. A man left off his hair to wear a wig when he wished to impose upon himself, and upon others, a sense of superior dignity. Would it not have been, indeed, difficult, with

it himself. From it I have drawn the inference, that men of merit are valuable in a state, even when their talents are no longer required. They are the natural rallying-points of public esteem, and of the ambitious emulation of ardent young men, over whom this feeling can alone exercise any sway.

My grandfather, being one day in company, observed a little old man, blind of one eye, and rather shabbily dressed, who talked with great volubility and vivacity in a most peremptory tone, rising frequently from his chair and reseating himself with quick and hasty motions, and not unfrequently finishing his sentences with his back to the fire,—a vulgar liberty never taken at that time. The order of St. Louis did not then exist *, and the old gentleman wore no distinctive mark of any profession. He decided in an authoritative tone upon every subject, so much so that he appeared only an impertinent chatterer to the Marquis of Mirabeau, who could not conceive how such a man was tolerated in good society. My grandfather, at length, losing patience, asked who he was; and received for answer,—

"What! you do not know the Marquis of Montal?"

This Marquis of Montal, one of the best generals of his day, was a man of high renown. He had never been made Marshal of France, on account of an answer, savouring too much of military frankness, which he had the boldness to make to Louis XIV. As a follower of the Prince's party, he had defended Mezières against the king, to whom he surrendered the town, after a most determined resistance. A long time after, being with the army in the same town, and dining with the king, his Majesty said to him—

" Montal, do you recollect our having met here formerly ? "

" Yes, Sir," replied Montal; " and had our powder not been exhausted, your majesty would still be outside the walls *."

Montal, not much in favour after this speech, was not the less celebrated. My grandfather had heard, at Steinkerque, the cry, " To us, Montal," bring back the whole of the infantry to the charge, with such intrepidity, that a perfect surprise was changed into a complete victory. Such was the feat of the little old man, who at first was mistaken for an impertinent chatterer.

" The moment I heard his name mentioned," said

* Mirabeau, who has not made any reflection here upon this anecdote, has elsewhere censured, with justice, the king's question, calling it " an indiscreet remark, perhaps, from a master."— *Advice to a young Prince, who feels the necessity of correcting his education*, p. 63.

my grandfather, "I found his manners noble, his motions and his impatience those of a hero. His eloquence was manly, impressive, and persuasive. He was, however, the same man, and I was nothing but a fool."

In 1696, my grandfather obtained a regiment of infantry, or, as it was then styled, permission to treat with M. de Clerembault. According to the regulations established by Louvois, an officer was obliged to serve four years as Mousquetaire, and ten years as captain of cavalry. This minister died in 1691, and his regulations remained in force until the great war, which broke out at the commencement of the century, when Chamillard, old and incompetent, allowed it to fall into disuse. My grandfather had not therefore the usual delay to undergo. He was about thirty years of age when he obtained his regiment, which he found perfectly well composed. An anecdote, which my father has heard him relate, and which reflects honour on the individual to whom it refers, will give an idea of the soldiers of those times.

One day, as my grandfather was inspecting his men, he observed a soldier who shouldered his firelock in an awkward manner. He was on the point of reprimanding him, when the major of the regiment whispered—

"You shall know the reason of this, Colonel."

They passed on, and the officer related the following fact.

The regiment was quartered at Sarrelouis, and it was then forbidden, as it is still, for soldiers in garrison to

fight duels. The penalty incurred by the infringement of this regulation was to have the right hand cut off. This man, seeing two of his comrades fighting, rushed towards them, and, in obedience to the military regulation, which does not allow of two swords once crossed in fight being separated, except with a sword, drew his own, and throwing himself between the combatants, exclaimed—

"My friends, what are you doing?"

The guard was instantly on the spot. The two guilty soldiers fled, and the corporal (for the man had that rank), who remained, because he had done nothing wrong, was seized, with his drawn sword still in his hand, and conducted to the guard-house. He related the circumstance just as it had occurred. A court-martial assembled. He appeared before it with firmness, and stated the exact truth. The court asked him to give up the names of the guilty parties, and upon his refusal, threatened him with the punishment he had incurred, although with good intentions. He coolly replied—

"I know them, gentlemen, but I will not name them, and certainly not place them in the same situation I am in. Which of you would denounce his comrade? I will preserve two men for the king's service. Few soldiers are certain of being able to perform such service. I have incurred the penalty, and will undergo it. I only ask one favour: that is, to lose my left hand, that I may still be able to wield my sword for more meritorious actions."

There is too much of that servile spirit in the subaltern officer, which makes him glory in following the strict letter of the law in all its severity. He either will not, or dares not, emancipate himself from that superstitious sternness which costs vulgar minds so little, when exercised at the expense of others. This brave soldier was condemned, and was thankful for the mitigation of the sentence, which allowed him to preserve his right hand. When placed before the block, he said to the executioner—

" I have suffered the humiliation and the sentence for the sake of example. This is the penalty. The remainder is the king's order: I shall execute it myself. It must be done by the hand of a soldier. Retire, and give me the axe." He took it, and at one blow severed his left hand. This was the soldier who held his firelock with the stump of his arm.

It may be easily imagined that the attachment which my grandfather always felt for his soldiers was in no wise diminished by this heroic action. He looked upon the soldier as the child of the officer, and the colonel as the head of the family. He was literally adored by his men, and the troops which he commanded relied on this feeling, which many years after, in Italy, made them say—

" Do not let us approach Mirabeau. It will not do to-day. The men may get a wetting."

I have heard a military frolic related, of a more serious

nature, but which, making allowances for the difference of age, and greater experience, still bears evidence of that vivacity and decision which never forsook him.

At the close of a campaign, the Marquis of Nettancourt and my grandfather were returning to France with their regiments. They had already passed the frontier, and made two halts, when arriving at a town situated on the third line, and in the interior of the kingdom, the officers of the quarter-master's department came to inform them that the privates and non-commissioned officers were to encamp on the glacis, and the officers alone enter the town. This news was the more disagreeable to the men, because they were to remain in these quarters, and the season was far advanced. They had thought that tents were not to be used till the spring, and this disappointment, attributed to the predilection of the military authorities of the town for the burghers, greatly irritated the commanding officers, who, however, immediately made up their minds how to act. It was necessary to pass near the gate in order to reach the place of encampment. They gave directions to a lieutenant of grenadiers, to take the lead, quicken the step when they should be close to the guard-house, and seize the arms of the guard before the drummers could announce that the regiments were defiling. The officer chosen for this feat fulfilled his mission with dexterity and promptitude, and with the less difficulty, as this sort of invasion was totally unexpected. The

regiments then arrived, and instead of proceeding to the glacis, entered the town, and placed themselves in battle array on the great square. A guard was then placed at the commandant's door, and a demand for billets sent to the town-hall. Forage and provisions being already provided, nothing of the kind was demanded, and the greatest order prevailed. The colonels then sent an express to the court, informing the minister that having been received and billeted in the other fortified towns, and finding the gates of this place shut against the king's troops, they conceived it their duty, considering the state of the times, to make themselves masters of it, and secure the governor's person; and that as, according to their marching orders, they were to remain in that town, they should have time to receive the king's commands on the subject. Their messenger returned in three days, and the minister, who knew them both, wrote to them that the king did not entertain the slightest uneasiness respecting the fidelity of the commandant, and ordered them to continue their route.

The regiment under my grandfather's command stood in need of the strictest economy, on account of the low state of its finances. Two majors had successively carried off the military chest, and were at that moment detained in some fortress. M. d'Apremont, the lieutenant-colonel, a man distinguished by his birth and reputation, was extremely anxious to retire from

the service. Peace had just been concluded *. This respectable officer, worn out with continued hard service, foresaw that the Spanish succession would kindle a new war, and feared that he should be unable to quit the service with a good grace, if his conjectures proved correct. My grandfather solicited the retirement of M. d'Apremont, the lieutenant-colonelcy for M. de Narbonne, who was next in rank, and a majority for M. de la Javellière, a captainof not long standing. The permission for M. d'Apremont's retirement arrived; the lieutenant-colonelcy was granted to M. de Narbonne, but with regard to the majority, the answer was deferred. My grandfather, unaccustomed to a refusal, and unwilling to allow the minister to contract such a habit, repaired immediately to court, and calling upon M. Barbezieux, demanded an explanation. The minister told him that it was the king's will that M. de la Javellèire should not be promoted.

" Pray, Sir," said my grandfather, " has the king confided a regiment to me, and reserved to himself all controul over it ? "

" But," said the astonished minister, " do you suppose that the king has given you your regiment ? "

" No, certainly ; I have purchased my regiment, for the purpose of getting my bones broken in his majesty's service ; but as my life and honour are both at stake,

* The peace of Ryswick, 1697.

I am answerable for my regiment upon both, and it is for me to know and dispose of those for whom I am responsible. The king and his minister have reserved every possible right of examination into my own conduct, but they possess no controul over my regiment but with my acquiescence."

"Well, Sir, your memorials and your choice, particularly with regard to your field officers, form part of your conduct; the king confirms that part of it which he approves of, and refuses the rest."

"It is the reason of this refusal, Sir, that I ask."

"You are partial to M. de la Javellière, but he is one of the youngest officers of the regiment, and does not possess the talents which would justify his being preferred to his seniors in the service."

"I did not ask for the command of a regiment in order to form friendships, and exercise predilections, and M. de la Javellière is little calculated to inspire those preferences; but his conduct is correct, and he possesses six thousand francs a year (a very rare thing in the infantry). It is necessary that my regiment, which has been twice robbed by its majors, should have a trustworthy paymaster*. With regard to his capacity, that is my business; I demand from my subordinates nothing but zeal and punctuality. But I entreat you

* In those days the major acted as paymaster, and kept the military chest.—*Tr.*

to inform me upon what this reproach of preference is founded?"

"It was remarked, that one day, in reviewing your regiment, having found M. de la Javellière's company in bad order, you put the lieutenant under arrest."

"Certainly, Sir. The complement of men, the arms, and the description of men, are the captain's business; but the order, the cleanliness, and the regulations are the lieutenant's especial duty. The company was deficient in these respects only, and it was that officer I punished. But, Sir, I did not fancy myself of such consequence; I should scarcely have imagined that the king's minister watched my actions so closely. I shall know, however, who gives you such correct information, or on my return, I will have every man of them put to the rack!"

The minister could not now refrain from laughing, and told him to go into the office and get the commission of his major despatched. He there learned that a letter, giving an account of these circumstances, was signed by four captains, and written in the handwriting of one of them, M. Fise. On his return to his regiment, he sent for them, related the fact, and advised them to lose no time in having business to require their presence elsewhere, assuring them, that if they dared appear under arms, he would have them ignominiously driven from the field of battle. They

knew he was a man of his word, and immediately submitted. The war having broken out a short time after, these four gentlemen were sent back to him, each commanding a company in a new battalion added to his regiment; but as they were going to embark for Italy, he intimated to them in so earnest a manner, that if they were bold enough to accompany the regiment, he would have them shot on the very first opportunity, that three of them again left the corps. One, named Desaulnais, alone remained: he was then ill, and it appeared that he afterwards got into favour with his colonel, for when my father entered the regiment, this officer was lieutenant-colonel.

This La Javellière, the subject of so much dispute, plain in appearance and of the most unprepossessing manners, was nevertheless a man of great merit. During the wars in Italy, he gained the rank of major-general of infantry. He was adjutant-general of the army under Marshal Berwick, and my father found him governor of Philipsburgh.

Thus, the regiment of this extraordinary man seemed animated, as it were, by one spirit, and composed of one body, which the colonel directed at his will. Adored by his men *, whose respect he com-

* I remember, in 1742, that, following a detachment of volunteers, and riding by the side of the columns, I overheard an old soldier say, "Do you see those red facings? he belongs to the

manded, as a thunderbolt that they were sure to find at their head on every occasion, he was feared by his officers, whom his inordinate natural pride kept at too great a distance, unless their merit, their conduct, or their services made him unbend in their favour. Devoted to the interests of his subordinates, a zealous patron, and an active guardian, he obtained for them all he desired, because he never asked favours for himself, and never relaxed in his exertions, nor gave up his point. He shielded them against all vexatious details, for no commissioner would have dared to count after him, or review in any other manner than by simply walking with him in front of the regiment drawn up in line of battle. He always evinced an air of confidence which flattered the inspecting officer—so much were even his superiors subjugated by the loftiness which nature had imprinted upon all his actions. But, independently of the influence he thus exercised in favour of his men, he was their support in all their private affairs, and although at a distance, he was their solicitor before every species of tribunal. These particulars are not exaggerated: they are attested by all his contemporaries, and confirmed by the incredible respect, the universal ascendency he enjoyed. He who was merely on a level with so many others, by birth, military rank,

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Mirabeaus;—they are all devils."—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

and fortune, never allowed his natural superiority to be questioned. He risked every thing, and carried every thing before him. In seeking the causes of this, I think I have remarked that a sonorous name, (a real advantage, according to Montagne,) successively borne by men of distinguished merit, although of different characters,—a constant daring, an imperious but generous loftiness always in unison with their conduct and habits,—an imposing exterior, and all the virtues belonging to magnanimity, form an assemblage of advantages which it is difficult for the mass of mankind not to look up to with awe and obedience, when these heroic qualities are animated by a superior mind, acting with strict justice. My father, born ten years after the period I shall soon speak of, which my grandfather called "THE DAY ON WHICH I WAS KILLED," only saw him when he was weighed down by age, and by those dreadful wounds which had the effect of entirely changing his temper, and in some degree mastered him. My father has, however, often told me, that his manners were noble and natural. He was kind and affable with the lower orders, full of attention and urbanity towards those he esteemed, and his pride, peculiar to himself, his gestures, his look, and the very sound of his voice, could be felt, but never described.

At the peace which took place towards the close of the last century, my grandfather returned home in

consequence of his mother's death. He performed, on this occasion, the journey from Tarare to Marseilles in twenty-four hours. Postchaises were then unknown, and some idea may therefore be formed, by the rapidity of this journey, of the energy of his disposition. On his arrival, he found his mother dead; she had made him her heir. He proposed to his brother Hannibal to marry, promising that he himself would renounce all idea of matrimony, so much was his mind at that period absorbed by the wish of obtaining military renown. He had, in fact, refused several alliances, and among others, the daughter of Marshal d'Humières, who entertained a lively affection for him, and to whom the king afterwards granted the privilege of entailing her title upon her son-in-law, provided he took her name. The Chevalier Mirabeau did not appear more desirous than his brother of becoming the father of a family.

The war now broke out again, and my grandfather was ordered to Italy with his regiment, to which another battalion was added. He joined it, together with the Duke of Lesdiguières, his intimate friend, who died in that fatal country. This nobleman was the last duke of the name, and at the same time the last heir to the immense fortune which the celebrated marshal and constable had amassed. Noble, generous, and one of the first noblemen in France, this Duke of Lesdiguières had the same order in his affairs that most great lords have.

He possessed the estate of La Tour d'Aigues, one of the most magnificent residences in the kingdom, and contiguous to Mirabeau. It was afterwards sold by the Villeroi family to Bruni, the banker, for the sum of one million of livres. Lesdiguières was aware how much this property suited my grandfather, and wished to dispose of it to him for 400,000 francs. My grandfather was obstinate in his refusal of this offer, declaring he would never receive any indirect present, nor take advantage of such proffered bargain, especially from a friend. This estate, united to that of Mirabeau, would have formed one of the finest private properties in Europe.

My grandfather returned from Italy mutilated by wounds, which forced him to quit his favourite profession. He had always lived in great splendour; his military rank and the ruinous state of the times necessitated his doing so, and he thereby greatly impaired his fortune. But he did this with the most extraordinary order and method *.

* The expenses of his table were regulated with a foresight that might serve as an example to the army. At the opening of the campaign he placed in the hands of his major one hundred pistoles, or a thousand francs, for that purpose, and 1,500 livres for each of the last months, at which time the funds of almost all the other officers becoming deficient, his expenses were so much the more useful and honourable. Whatever were his private wants, he never allowed himself to touch these funds, which he looked upon as a sacred deposit. This judicious and noble conduct, and, above all, his uni-

M. de Barbezieux, the war minister, died a short time prior to this period *, and the king had not yet appointed his successor. Louis XIV had found Letellier at the head of the war department, and this minister had left the office to his son, Louvois, who, with great detriment to the interests both of the kingdom and of his master, rendered this department the most important of the state. His son Barbezieux also inherited the ministry, and upon the death of the latter, when it became necessary to make a choice, the king, who thought he had formed Louvois, when young, and also his son, when merely a child, appointed Chamillard to the vacant office. This Chamillard, a limb of the law, to whom the king had taken a fancy, was not altogether deficient in probity and docility, but had not the slightest capacity for office. From this period every thing was neglected: there was no plan, no order, no rule of conduct. An enormous increase took place in the army, and distant expeditions were ordered. The military stores, the hospitals and the depôts were everywhere robbed and plundered. There was universal dilapidation in all branches of the army, and Chamillard, with-

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versally admitted disinterestedness and unbounded generosity, distinguished him in those days of absolute degeneracy as much as his ardour, intrepidity, and talents, in a country where the war was carried on by infantry alone.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* 1701.—*Editor.*

out energy or talent, burthened with the administration of the finances, which were entirely exhausted, could accomplish nothing, and prevent nothing. He did little more than sign whatever was required of him. The authority of office, which has increased so much since that period, became more imperious in proportion as it was less respected. My grandfather was not of a temper to acknowledge such authority. Of an inflexible disposition at all times, he became still more so as he acquired knowledge and fame, and felt his own strength. The men in office, who represented the minister, or spoke in his name, had more than one quarrel with him, and endeavoured to annoy him. He affected the utmost contempt for the minister and his officials, and henceforward addressed all his memorials to the king, always following his own decisive and unbending will.

He had, for instance, demanded commissions of sub-lieutenant for thirteen cadets, whom he had brought with him. He was told that the king disliked these cadets, and wished to have but a small number of officers in his regiments, who had risen from the ranks. This piece of affectation was the more out of season because we were then at war, and was really injurious to the nation, even before it became so by its consequences. Our army, deprived of every thing in foreign countries, experienced a daily diminution. The troops were increased by the formation of new regiments

carried to a discouraging and ridiculous excess. These new corps were at last termed "sallad regiments," and were sold for a certain number of rations of bread. The king, with a nominal army of 500,000 men, had not in reality even half that number of effective troops. The general officers and colonels became plunderers, especially in Italy, where the country was rich, the quarters distant from the centre of command, and the sovereigns weak, suspected, and held in very little estimation. The colonels, in connivance with the king's commissioners, received the pay of the vacancies among the officers without filling them up. While all this abuse was going on, and every barefooted ragamuffin was a captain, a few commissions of sub-lieutenant were refused to a meritorious officer, desirous of completing his regiment with men deserving of confidence. But my grandfather, on receiving the courtly letter which put a negative upon his demand, assembled his regiment, and appointed the thirteen cadets to the rank he had intended to confer upon them. He then wrote to the minister, that when he took charge of those young men, he had promised their families that they should die officers, and as he exposed them to be killed every day, he had not thought proper to wait for the arrival of their commissions; that he had admitted them as officers in his regiment, and their commissions might be sent as soon as convenient.

wards of six feet high."—"Ah," returned the hero, "he is very great in the field of battle!*" Is it surprising that the hearts of the brave should have been more devoted to this general than to themselves? My grandfather loved him with an affection bordering upon superstition.

The latter was, however, a greater disciplinarian than his indulgent general. It may be well imagined, that the privileges of the churches and monasteries did not receive any very great support from a man of his character. Having learnt that they had begun to take an undue advantage of their privileges, he sent word to the monks not to go too far, as he should certainly seize his deserters, even in their houses. Notwithstanding this intimation, the Cordeliers harboured some deserters. My grandfather made his men fall in, and marched them to the church. The gates were closed.

"Grenadiers," said he, "axe in hand!" The men obeyed. No sooner had they struck the first blows than the doors were opened, and showed the cohort of monks *in pontificalibus*, with one bearing the Host at their head.

"Dauphin," said my grandfather, turning to his major, "call the chaplain of the regiment, and let him

* The double meaning of the Duke's expression is lost in English. In French the word *grand* signifies both *great* and *tall*.—*Tr.*

take the Host from the hands of that fellow *." This resolution put the procession to flight. He proceeded onwards, seized the deserters from behind the great altar, and had them shot before the church door. Although this took place in a friendly country, the

* The Marquis of Mirabeau, in his unpublished Memoirs, expresses himself as follows respecting this anecdote:—

"It would be wrong to suppose that this military mode of proceeding had the slightest tinge of irreligion. Calculating and philosophic impiety was not yet in vogue, and this feeling has pervaded the military character only to degrade it. In my time even the veterans of the army spurned those who reasoned for or against, saying that religion was not a proper subject for discourse. There were no philosophers in the army at that period; all the 'strong minded,' or, as La Bruyère calls them, the 'weak minded,' were at Paris, in the circles *à la Ninon*, and similar ones. The impiously debauched were of course known, for there are always some amid war and disorder. My father, though a jovial companion in his youth, was far from being tainted with this vice. I have heard him relate, that during his stay at Mirabeau, occasioned by some repairs which his château was undergoing (1702, John Anthony was then thirty-six years of age), our plantation caught fire: as the conflagration was dreadful, he caused the Host to be brought out, and the flames immediately recoiled upon themselves."

We read in another part of these memoirs—"He had always been religiously inclined: for instance, after he was wounded, which occurred on Lady-day (he received fifteen wounds on the same day), he every year periodically devoted that day to prayer, in gratitude for his escape, which certainly was miraculous. Age, the habit of frequenting those who set good examples, and setting a good example himself, had increased this disposition, but in the manner of Bayard. With such people the man of honour was a Christian, as a matter of course. One would no more have thought of hazarding philosophical trifling in their presence than of giving them the lie. Such a thought never entered anybody's head."—*Editor.*

customs of which were respected because it belonged to the Spanish crown, care was afterwards taken to afford no asylum to French deserters.

At the very first campaign, he exposed himself so much, that his first battalion, completely decimated, was unable to continue in active service, and remained in garrison. But he was allowed to serve at the head of the second. He was proceeding to join the army with this battalion, when he received an order from the Prince of Vaudemont, governor of the Milanese, to deviate from his route, and repair to a neighbouring village. He soon learnt that the object of this interruption was to serve as a guard to the King of Spain, who that year visited Italy, and was to sleep at the village that night. The king arrived shortly after, with his Spanish court, and the general officers of both nations. In the evening, my grandfather presented himself to receive the watch-word, and the Duke of Medina advanced to give it to him. After having, in the most marked manner, pretended not to hear, he suddenly drew himself up, and declared, that as the King of France honoured the colonels who waited upon him by giving them the watch-word in person, he would, in this instance, receive it from nobody but his Catholic Majesty. The Spanish court was immediately thrown into confusion. It is well known how tenaciously observant this nation is of etiquette, and the young king had received particular recom-

mendations strictly to observe Spanish forms and manners. Of all the instructions he had received, he bore this most in mind, and on several occasions it had proved of the greatest service to him. The whole court opposed any departure from the established forms, which, in this instance, they considered derogatory; and the colonel became the object of the most pressing solicitations. Generals, ministers, every one, in short, begged him, as an especial favour, to forego his pretension. He replied, that he was prepared to do any thing except allowing the rank which his sovereign had bestowed upon him to be dishonoured in his person. They stated to him the strict and repeated instructions given to avoid every thing that could in the remotest degree excite the displeasure of the Spaniards; they pointed out to him the consequences of a quarrel arising out of a mere question of precedence; the suspected provinces, the two kingdoms shaken. He assured them, that they imputed to him three times greater political views than his head could carry, and that he went no further than this: that the king should give him the watch-word in person, or that he would receive none. Several officers present, who knew him, stated that his character was most inflexible, and the Spanish ministers at length chose the plan of forgetting to give the word. He perceived it, and having asked twice in a loud voice, "if there was no watch-word," and observing every one hang

down his head, he withdrew from the apartment, and gave the command: "Drummers! recall!" All the kings in the universe would not have prevented his regiment from obeying him when he was at its head. He relieved the guard, and continued his march. The Señors became as much agitated as if all the hussars of Hungary were there. They called him back, and Philippo Quinto whispered in his ear, "Saint Ambrose and Milan." When tranquillity was restored, he told the general officers that if they had sent him back to his staff, which was his proper place, the commander of his battalion, remaining alone, might have received the watch-word from a valet de chambre, if he had liked. On the following day, the king, perceiving him on his passage, turned his back upon him, but the Spaniards were henceforward convinced that it was useless to attempt forcing such a man.

My grandfather was present at the battles of Chiari* and Luzara,† and was at Mantua during the famous siege of that city. That protracted siege gave occasion to a succession of encounters. Sorties were every day made in order to procure ammunition, forage, and provisions, attack the enemy's posts and create diversions. He everywhere distinguished himself, and particularly at the most important of these actions, called the battle of St. Anthony.‡ He commenced the attack at the

* 1701.—*Editor.* † 1702.—*Editor.*

‡ 1703.—*Editor.*

head of twelve companies of grenadiers, and found himself opposed to almost a whole army. He maintained his footing, and gave Marshal Tessé, who commanded in the town, time to come up with the élite of the troops*.

My father has heard the generals of that period say, that nothing could be more striking than to see a man of his commanding stature upon one of those heaps of turf raised in that country to be afterwards used as

* We here relate an anecdote of which Mirabeau had no knowledge, and which will add to the interest inspired by this singular and chivalrous character.

"As I find a pleasure in talking to you, I must relate a fact which I heard the other day. The count of Cologon stated that he was told by Marshal de la Fare, then very young, and colonel of the regiment of Gâtinois, at that time in Italy, that after a brilliant but sanguinary engagement, where my father's regiment was cut to pieces, and he had his clothes pierced with balls, the whole regiment with the colours were returning to Cremona upon a single waggon. My father was received like a hero by Marshal Tessé and the army. A brother of M. Chamillard, who was Maréchal de Camp, said to him—

"'I promise you, Sir, that I will give a good account of this to my brother.'

"This devil of a man looked at him and replied: 'Your brother, Sir, is very happy in possessing you, for without you he would be the greatest fool in the kingdom.' The good man Cologon added: 'A promotion then took place, and he was not included.' I own I should not have thought, that in my sixty-sixth year I should learn any new fact respecting those of our family who have preceded us."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, 5th Jan.* 1781.

We have copied the name "Cologon" as it is written in the autograph letter, according to the vicious pronunciation of the time: the real name was probably "Coetlogon."—*Editor.*

fuel. He appeared at a distance like a steeple, and exposing himself, of his own accord, to the constant firing of four thousand men, coolly examined the position of the enemy, whilst his troops were ordered to lie flat on the ground. The advantage remained with us, and the Duke of Mantua, like a true Italian, came to the gates of his city to witness the entrance of the victorious army. As my grandfather received many encomiums upon his conduct, the duke conceived a perfect enthusiasm for him; and the following day at the play, he called him into his box, and told him that he was about to write to the king, and would beg, as a favour, that his majesty would promote him to the rank of brigadier. My grandfather entreated the duke not to do so, being unwilling to expose himself to the reproach of owing his promotion to favour. I do not know whether he did not afterwards acknowledge that this act of disinterestedness was rather exaggerated for the times in which he lived; but my father speaking to him about it one day, as having heard the circumstance from the Marquis of Leuville, he merely said—

"It is true; and if I had been made a brigadier at that period, I should have become a lieutenant-general when I was made brigadier."

Meanwhile, our affairs took an unfortunate turn in Italy. Marshal Catinat, as it is well known, had merely made his appearance at the army. His name reminds me of an anecdote which I have heard my father

relate, having heard it from his father, who had afterwards become acquainted with that great man, for whom he entertained a profound veneration. My grandfather went one day to M. de Saint Pouange's office, and not finding him there, addressed a clerk seated at a desk in the front closet, saying, that it was perhaps the tenth time he had been there to speak about some business, mentioning its nature. The clerk replied that he knew not whether it had been done.

"Look in your books," replied the imperious soldier; "you ought not to be so ignorant." At these words the man put on his spectacles, took down an immense folio from a book-case behind him, turned over the leaves with care, and then informed my grandfather that he could find no trace of the business being in progress. My grandfather turned his back to him, and muttering some *a parte*, expressive of his impatience, left the office, and going down stairs, met M. de Saint Pouange, who had just returned. What was his astonishment, when returning to the office, he heard M. de Saint Pouange exclaim to the supposed clerk—

"Good heavens! Marshal, are you here? And you are good enough to wait for me." Confused at this unexpected circumstance, he asked a neighbour what it meant. He now learnt that it was Marshal Catinat who had thus allowed himself, in jest, to be treated like a clerk, accused and scorned for his negligence. This

philosophical specimen of the virtuous pride of a great man deserves to be recorded.

This great general did not suit the Duke of Savoy, who betrayed us, and whom he had kept in check and beaten during the preceding war. After him, Marshal Villeroi came to display his incapacity, and fortunately allowed himself to be taken at Cremona. At length the Duke of Vendome appeared, a hero truly French, both by his conduct and the qualities of his heart. Adored by his army, but negligent and unequal, he was always certain of repairing his mistakes with the superiority of a great mind, and with a brilliancy of action that gave them the character of the greatest exploits. This prince, whose morals were undoubtedly too relaxed, but who was truly worthy of being beloved for his benevolence and winning manners, had the fault of too highly prizing military valour, which, in his opinion, comprehended everything. It may easily be conceived what a man like my grandfather, brave, irreproachable, and of high talent, must have been in his eyes. The duke found in him every good quality: sense, daring, activity, unparalleled intrepidity, an indefatigable soul—in short, the nature, the science, and the genius of the profession. He attached him to his person in a manner that still further spoiled my grandfather. He gave him constant employment, answered for him, overlooked all his follies, had not the courage to condemn him in anything, was his only moderator, and, after some freak, would say to him—

"Neither you nor I shall ever make our fortune; but with a small number of such men as you, I would answer for the fortunes of France." Those who had any difficulty with the impetuous colonel, applied invariably to the Duke of Vendome.

The lieutenant of the *colonelle* *, to whom my grandfather abandoned the whole of his pay and emoluments as colonel, on condition of keeping his company in perfect order, came to him one day to inform him that a stoppage had been made from his pay for the capitation tax. He learnt that it was by order of the commissary general, M. d'Andrezel, who fulfilled the duties of intendant of the army. He immediately ordered the corporal at his door to go with four fusiliers to head-quarters, and take from the stables of the intendant a beautiful piebald horse, which he knew that functionary possessed, and bring it to him. His order was punctually obeyed. The astonished intendant wanted to draw up a *procès verbal* of the proceeding, but was advised not to expose himself against so terrible an adversary, but to complain to the Duke of Vendome. The prince could not refrain from laughing on listening to his sad tale, and promised to arrange the matter. He sent for my grandfather and asked him the cause of this act of hostility.

"My lord!" he replied, "M. Picon d'Andrezel has

* The company commanded by the Colonel. – *Editor.*

a pen and offices wherewith and wherein he makes out orders. He has stopped from my pay a capitation-tax, which I do not owe, since I pay it at home. I have at my orders some fusiliers, by whose means I have obtained the piebald horse taken from him, which is certainly a good equivalent for my capitation money, and worth more. We each of us use our peculiar weapons; it is the right of war, and if he does not find it to his taste, we will proceed no further."

The duke experienced no difficulty in extracting his promise, that if the capitation money was returned, the intendant's palfrey should also be restored to him. He wished to make them dine together with him.

"No, prince," replied my grandfather, "I cannot."

When asked the reason: "I cannot," said he, "dine with a man who may be some day hanged for peculation."

The thing passed off as a joke, but such was not the case with a more serious affair, which the Duke of Vendome could not succeed in arranging.

The Marquis of Créqui, a general officer of great reputation and merit, but proud and ambitious, was at that time director-general of the infantry. He obtained an order from the king, directing all the colonels of infantry to forward, in future, the accounts of their respective regiments through him. He transmitted this order to the majors, that they might notify it to the colonels. My grandfather received his major very ill,

and even refused to believe in the authenticity of the order. But the fact did not long remain doubtful, and my grandfather's opinion upon the subject was also very soon known. One of the reasons why he was so much feared, was the peremptory manner in which he expressed his opinions. Indignant at this innovation, and particularly displeased at not having been thought deserving of a private communication, or at least of some preparatory intimation, he resolved to die rather than submit. He complained so loudly, expressed his feelings in such unqualified terms, and in the most military manner, with regard to those who were dastardly enough to degrade their rank by submitting to the innovation, that he excited an almost general insurrection. The Duke of Vendome was not with his army, and the matter remained undecided until his return, when it was to be settled. Immediately on his arrival, the director-general and the officers waited upon him, and the Marquis of Créqui politely accosting my grandfather, complained to him of his not having condescended to enter into an explanation with him, adding, that had he done so, he (the Marquis) would have felt great satisfaction in assuring him that the orders were not meant for him, nor for those who served like him. The Marquis of Créqui added, that on the other hand, my grandfather must admit that most of the colonels robbed their regiments, allowed the vacancies of officers to remain unfilled, and committed or allowed a

thousand other abuses which could only be repressed on the spot, and by the most vigilant authority.

My grandfather entertained the highest respect for the Marquis of Créqui, who was a lieutenant-general, distinguished alike by his birth, reputation, talents, and valour. He replied, that he should always be disposed to make the first step towards him, whenever they met upon equal terms; but that as long as he lived he would not know what it was to give up an acquired right. Besides, it was not for him to pretend to any distinction above his brother officers. The Marquis of Créqui observed, that they might all of them look for that respect which a man like him could not fail to show, and that he did not see how it could be derogatory to them to have him for their interpreter instead of a chief clerk.

" Let us cut the matter short," said my grandfather; " if, when you were colonel, and M. de la Chétardie an *apostle*, he had called upon you to give him your accounts, what would you have done?"

The Marquis of Créqui, annoyed by the comparison, replied that " all men were not alike."

" I admit of no distinction, Sir," said my grandfather; " the king may deprive me of my rank, but he cannot force me to give you my accounts."

They then entered the duke's closet; he repeated the same thing to his general in presence of all the staff. The duke, seeing that it would be necessary

either to act in opposition to superior orders, or to give cause for a general insurrection of the infantry, told them to apply to the court for a decision upon the question. My grandfather wrote immediately, and showed himself quite prepared to abide by the consequences of his resistance. The answer of the court was, that the order did not apply to him, nor to those who served as he did, and that he might forward his accounts directly. This clearly signified that the order was meant for nobody, and the infantry was thus preserved, during his time, from that species of degradation.

This haughtiness of character was not, however, altogether unjustifiable. My grandfather daily became more distinguished in his military career. He had an attack of quartan ague, which lasted four years. He has mentioned, on this occasion, a circumstance which occurred to him at Milan. Being in company with some ladies who were having their fortunes told, the sibyl, without his having spoken a word to her, said to him—

" You have got the quartan ague, you will get cured, but the remedy will be worse than the disease."

And indeed when he " was killed," as he expressed himself, at the dreadful battle where he received so many wounds, he was cured of his fever. This illness never made him lose a single day. The regimen he followed was always a little too much in accordance with his will, his strength, and his impatience; he always

carried about him his bottle of Peruvian bark, in the trenches, in action, and on a march. He would go a little in advance, and when the fit came on, place himself behind some bush. My father, who, after him, served in the same regiment, has heard old officers relate that they stood in awe of him, whether absent or present. Indeed, concealed behind his bush, he watched his regiment marching, and, as he knew the exact number of each company, if a single man was missing, he would call the lieutenant, and if the latter could not account for the absence of his man, he would say to him—

"Go, and search for your man, and do not make your appearance without him."

In the ensuing winter, he was left in command at Desinsano, a town situated near the lake of Garda, on the borders of, or perhaps comprised within, the Venetian states. Although this post was very near the openings of the Tyrolese mountains, and consequently greatly exposed to insults from the enemy, such was the confidence which his intrepidity and vigilance inspired, that a depôt, a storehouse, and an hospital were established there. It was here, and under his command, that Marshal Belle-Isle made his first campaign. This general has often said to my father and uncle, in presence of the whole court, that he was proud in having studied his profession under one of the most distinguished officers in Europe.

It may well be conceived, that in such a place the curfew bell was ordered to be rung early, and that the commandant kept watch for all. A little after eleven o'clock one night, the alarm bell was heard: the great hospital was on fire. My grandfather instantly rushed to the spot, muffled up in his cloak. On entering the building, a man well powdered, in full dress, and quite composed, came towards him, saying—

"Ah! Marquis, what a misfortune!"

"Who is that man?" exclaimed my grandfather.

He was informed that it was the director of the hospital.

"Let him be arrested, and placed in safe custody," said my stern grandfather. He then proceeded to the thickest of the fire, which was raging everywhere. The drums beat to arms, the troops instantly assembled, and maintained all possible order both within and without the building. But in order to save the principal part of the hospital, it became necessary to pull down some portion of it, so as to separate it from the wing on fire, containing two thousand patients. What an agony for a commander so strongly attached to his soldiers!

"Ah! gentlemen," said he, next day, to the assembled officers, "how often must we remind ourselves that another would have done worse in our place, for our hearts to be able to bear up against the frightfully necessary acts incidental to our career." The feelings of humanity which are found in a strong and lofty

mind, which despises dangers, are the best lessons that example can procure.

With regard to the director, my grandfather had formed his judgment of him at the very first glance. He said to himself—

"I was certainly the first up. I am always the quickest in case of alarm, and I must be so where I have the command. When, however, I came to the place threatened with danger, I found a man full dressed, calm, and composed. This man could not have been in bed, and yet every one ought to have retired two hours before. He must then have expected this accident. As he did not prevent it, he is most probably the author of it, with a view of burning his accounts, and giving up to the flames some supposed stores of drugs and linen, which in reality do not exist."

Nor was he mistaken. It appeared from the information taken on the spot, that this man had been seen lurking and hiding things with precaution. In short, his conduct furnished all the indications which come to light on such occasions, when a diligent search is made. He was taken to head quarters, loaded with irons, and thence conveyed to France, together with all the evidence against him. He was heard no more of, but those kind of people have too many accomplices not to escape, especially during a time of disorder and plunder *.

* During the war of 1733, my uncle, the Bailli of Mirabeau, met with an old priest at Desinsano, who, with some of the older in-

I am not certain whether it was at the same place that he occupied the palace of a noble Venetian, which had been left entirely furnished. Some general officers dining with him one day, one of them asked him what he intended to do with the pictures when he left the palace. My grandfather replied, that having found them there, he should leave them there.

"In that case," returned the officer, "I will take charge of them."

My grandfather immediately warned the proprietor, and advised him to remove them, and also a quantity of plate, which his servants had found concealed in the roof. The *Monsignor* wished to present the servants with a hundred ducats, but as their master had accustomed them to take nothing, which practice continued in his establishment during his life-time, they sent back the money. This circumstance appeared to me little worthy of remark, when related to me, but it really was so, considering the period, and the country where it occurred, for every body else plundered without shame or scruple. What took place in Westphalia is a sufficient proof that this species of meanness does not yield to the influence of a growing civilization *.

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habitants of the place, showed him all sorts of attention, in honour of the memory of his father, whom they perfectly recollected.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* This is in allusion to the extortions with which the French

On the return of the season, the war was carried on with renewed vigour. My grandfather then received a warning, which, far from making him believe that he was not invulnerable, confirmed him in the idea of his great good fortune in this respect.

He was in the trenches at the siege of a town, the name of which I have forgotten. On visiting the works of the miners, he found the men benumbed with cold. Desirous of animating them, he advanced, according to his usual custom, without the least regard to his personal safety, in the most exposed situations, which, especially for a man of his stature, was perilous in the extreme. He received a shot on his breast which took away his breath. His great-coat had but three buttons, all buttoned, and the ball struck exactly on one of them. It fell quite flattened, but left a dreadful contusion. He now relied more than ever upon his lucky star; but war, according to Marshal de Grammont, is like the game of faro—"Wait, only, and I will catch thee;" and

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generals were charged during the seven years' war, especially the Duke of Richelieu.

"During my journey in 1730 my father made me come twice to his bed-side, and, for the first time, did me the honour to address to me a direct recommendation: this was never to take anything during the campaign, nor to think that anything of the enemy's belonged to me. I can assert, with regard to this recommendation, that I did not stand in need of it. Indeed, I have not, during my time, seen many examples of this mean vice, which in my father's time was very prevalent in Italy."—*Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

indeed my grandfather paid on one single occasion the price of his long impunity.

We have already stated that we do not possess any regular particulars of the various exploits of this high-minded man, who discoursed excellently upon warfare, but never spoke of himself. He was, however, so shattered with gunshot wounds, that it was impossible for his children not to know that, at the celebrated battle of Cassano, he "was killed," according to his own expression, and even that of his contemporaries. Sixty years after, the old Marquis of Bissy, being in company with my grandmother at the house of his sister-in-law, Madame de Castellane, said to her that he had formerly known a person of her name, who was killed in Italy, in 1705; and although she assured him that she had married the very person since that period, and that he lived thirty-two years after, he never would credit her assertion.

This affair of Cassano was preceded for my grandfather, by one of those great actions which decide the fate of a campaign. The Duke of Vendome did not appreciate at their true worth the talents of Prince Eugene as a commander.

"He has nothing but cunning and conceit," said he, "and Staremberg is superior to him."

This cunning man nevertheless obtained some advantages over the French hero, which the admirable coup-d'œil of the latter repaired with a boldness that

always gave him a sort of superiority over his rival. On the occasion of which I speak, our general had placed too much reliance upon his brother, the grand prior, who commanded the main body of the army. On a sudden, the duke received intelligence that Prince Eugene had gained, by surprise, two forced marches, and was about to throw a bridge over the Adda. From the impossibility of arriving in time to prevent the passage, the best thing to be done was to despatch an express to his brother, with orders to proceed instantly to the spot, preceded by a body of light troops sent forward with all possible haste. But he was aware of the dilatory character of his brother, who, on this account, was sometimes accused of being jealous of the duke's reputation. In this perplexity, Vendome sent for my grandfather, and told him that he would give the world if a detachment could arrive in time to thwart Prince Eugene's measures, adding that the preservation of the Milanese depended upon this passage. My grandfather requested to have the grenadiers of the division. Thirty companies were confided to him. It was at first intended to make the cavalry carry them, each horseman taking a foot soldier behind him; but there was no cavalry at hand, and besides, infantry soldiers, full of confidence, and properly led, surmount every obstacle, whilst the horseman is frequently obliged to make a circuitous route, in a country intersected with ditches. My grandfather had a perfect

knowledge of that part of Italy. The march to be performed by his detachment was nothing less than thirty-six leagues in twenty-four hours. He set off with the firm resolution of overcoming even impossibilities, and informed his men that the safety of the Milanese was at stake, as the passage of the Adda would make the enemy instantly master of it, and, at the same time, endanger Vendome's reputation. All the soldiers marched forward, at the word of their beloved commander, with inconceivable zeal and alacrity. Montluc was perfectly right, when he said that the strength of a horse is more easily exhausted than that of a man, and that a jaded horse cannot be made to proceed further, but a man, apparently exhausted, may, by the influence of glory or the hope of booty, begin his task again, and set out anew, as if perfectly refreshed. My grandfather only allowed his troops to halt once to take food. During the halt, he caused the provisions which were found upon the spot to be distributed among his men. There was not sufficient wine for some companies, and it would have been necessary to have fetched it from distant villages.

"My friends," said my grandfather, "the honour of our general is at stake, and we must justify the confidence placed in us. Time presses hard. I have two hundred Louis in my pocket, they shall belong to those companies which have not been able to feed. Will you have them?"

" Yes, Colonel," exclaimed the grenadiers; " your property is ours, our blood is yours; let the survivors enjoy the wages, and he who lags behind be hanged."

They all instantly rose, and marched forwards like fresh men. My grandfather accomplished his extraordinary task, and on his arrival, had the satisfaction to find that the enemy were only making their preparations. He immediately stationed his men, and relying upon some in whom he could place confidence, threw himself, perfectly exhausted, upon the ground, where he slept a few moments, with his portmanteau for a pillow. The day broke, and the morning salutation which awoke him, was a blow he received from the arm of a soldier, who had taken part of his pillow, and whose limb had just been shot off by the early cannonade of the enemy. All this noise, which did little harm, for the troops were lying in the thickets on the bank of the river, was the signal of the enemy's abandoning their project; and shortly after, as the day appeared, boats and planks were seen collected on the opposite bank, and some drifting down the stream.

My grandfather now waited for further orders. Vendome came up with great rapidity, and directed him to follow the course of the Adda, with his detachment, as Prince Eugene was pursuing the same movement on the opposite bank. Vendome's division soon joined the detachment, and marched towards the bridge at Cassano, where it was to cross

the Adda, and effect a junction with the main army, stationed a few miles further on in the plain, under the command of the grand prior. Vendome's division was little more than a large detachment of infantry. As it was hastening to cross the bridge of Cassano, Prince Eugene's army, which they did not think so near, was seen advancing directly towards the bridge.

Sixty-five thousand men, infantry and cavalry, with artillery in proportion, composed the enemy's force. The Duke of Vendome had only seventeen battalions of infantry, with neither cavalry nor cannon. All the rest of his division had remained behind, and the main army, though within hearing of the firing, remained stationary, and sent no assistance. Cadieu, alone, indignant at this inaction, quitted the army on a sudden, and advanced with his brigade, which only reached the scene of action a little before the issue of the battle *. It was in moments like these, when others would have given way to despair, that the resources of Vendome's genius made him appear a superior being. He was on the point of being cut off: he instantly ordered the troops to defile, the bridge to be cleared, throwing into the river the equipages which impeded the passage. He then chose the field of battle in the plain, and stationed the regiments as they arrived. At the bridge of Cassano my grandfather offered

* August 15th, 1705.—*Editor.*

violence to one of his best friends, in order to pass the first and precede him to the post of danger. He was at the head of the brigade of his regiment; the Marquis of Chaumont commanded the brigade of Auvergne. Both reached the foot of the bridge at the same time. Chaumont claimed precedence on the score of his brigade being the most ancient; my grandfather, seizing his pistols, passed on first. He mentioned this circumstance afterwards with much regret, as they never saw each other after. Almost every one was either killed or taken prisoner at this battle, and the Marquis of Chaumont, mortally wounded, asked what had become of his friend Mirabeau; he was told that he was killed. The Marquis, wrapping himself up in his cloak, laid himself down and expired.

The Ritorte, an inconsiderable rivulet, but deep and precipitously imbedded, falls into the Adda at Cassano, and flows in a circular direction through the plain. Vendome placed his troops, as they arrived, on the banks of this stream, in order to arrest Prince Eugene's progress. Towards the centre of the ground, which he was enabled to occupy, was a stone bridge, at the head of which were some mills. There had been no time to destroy this bridge, and Vendome stationed the Marquis of Guerchois with the grenadiers in the mills, and confided to my grandfather and his brigade the guard of the banks that led to the bridge.

Prince Eugene, always outgeneraled by the daring of his rival, whenever an opportunity occurred, suspended his march when he saw him advance, and formed his own army on the opposite bank. He had the advantages which the place afforded: his ground was more elevated, and covered with trees, whilst ours was lower and quite unsheltered. He formed his army in four lines, placed his batteries, and opened a murderous fire upon our battalions, whose position it became necessary to change. It was impossible for my grandfather to destroy the bridge; the attempt would have exposed his troops to be slaughtered, by attracting the attention of the enemy, who observed everything, and might have attacked him with a superior force. He contented himself with throwing some faggots and branches of trees upon the bridge, as if it had been destroyed. He then made his brigade lie down, and, according to his usual custom, placed himself on the other side to examine the manœuvres of the enemy, within range of a most dreadful fire, and almost within pistol shot.

For a long time the enemy thought the bridge destroyed; but at length an aide-de-camp of the Count of Linanges came to ascertain the fact, and though mortally wounded, succeeded in reaching his general, and informing him that the bridge was still entire. Prince Eugene, who had three times the number of troops that he could conveniently station on his ground,

immediately, without reducing the infantry of his lines, whose firing swept the plain, caused the mills to be attacked by a strong column, which carried off Guerchois and his grenadiers, freed the passage of the bridge, and cutting its way into the plain, through our centre, divided our little army.

My grandfather had foreseen this manœuvre. He did not commit the fault of presenting himself before a column strong enough to carry every thing before it, as was the case afterwards at Malplaquet, Fontenoi, &c. He allowed them to proceed forward, carried away by their ardour, and hurried on by those who followed them. When he saw them completely engaged, he made his troops rise, and placing himself at their head, attacked the enemy's flank, overthrew them, and pursued them beyond the bridge, which they recrossed in the utmost confusion. Having thus replaced things in their former situation, he returned to his post, and stationed his men under the same shelter as before. This manœuvre had been executed under a most galling and well directed fire from the double lines of the enemy, and the loss of men was very considerable. The Duke of Vendome hastening to the attack, found it already over, the whole line lying flat upon the ground, and the colossus on his feet. He ordered my grandfather to do as the others did, and not expose himself to be killed before the retreat. His faithful adherent exclaimed—

" I never expose myself but when it is necessary.

I am wanted here; but with regard to yourself, my lord, this is not your place. I answer for the post: leave this place, or else I will abandon you."

The prince then ordered him, in the name of the king, to come down from his station.

"Go to the devil, both you and the king, too," replied the impetuous officer; "I am doing my duty, go and perform yours."

The kind-hearted and generous prince yielded, and, in fact, the place was not tenable.

Very shortly after, my grandfather's right arm was shattered; but his spirit remained undaunted. He made a scarf of his handkerchief for the broken limb, and remained at his post, expecting another attack. When the moment arrived, he seized an axe with his left hand, and performing again the same manœuvre, defeated the enemy, and made them recross the bridge.

Here ill-fortune seemed to await him. While in the act of rallying his men, he received a musket shot, which cut the muscles of his neck and the jugular vein. He fell upon the bridge, and his brigade dispersed. M. de Montolieu, a knight of Malta, a man of rank from Provence, and my grandfather's kinsman, was wounded by his side. He instantly tore his shirt and those of others in order to stop the blood, but the intrepid Mirabeau was soon entirely senseless. An old serjeant, called Laprairie, begged of

the sub-major of the regiment, Gaudin, a Gascon, who had risen from the ranks, and owed every thing to his colonel, to help him in carrying his wounded commander from the bridge. Gaudin refused, saying, he was dead; and when it was afterwards known that Prince Eugene had sent my grandfather back, this officer did not dare to appear again in his brigade. In this situation, my grandfather served, as it were, as a footstool for crowds of the enemy, who hastened to avail themselves of his disaster. The cavalry crossed the bridge with great rapidity, following the infantry. Who would then have said that our branch could have sprung from this mutilated and abandoned body? Fortunately, the kind-hearted Laprairie covered his head with an iron kitchen pot; but notwithstanding this protection, it was severely wounded.

The Duke of Vendome perceiving his line broken, the enemy forming in the plain, and judging, of course, that the bridge had been carried, exclaimed —

"Ah! Mirabeau is dead!"

This flattering encomium, dear to our family, must never be forgotten. He immediately adopted a resolution worthy of a hero. He drew off his troops, rallied them, formed the chord of an arc, according to his original plan, advanced his left to the Adda at the bridge of Cassano, and his right to the rivulet, so that he left the enemy only a very limited field of battle. The intrepidity of the remnant of our battalions

prevented the enemy's numerous forces from deploying. Our battalions, though confusedly intermingled, still formed an impenetrable line. Vendome, seeing a great number of men who retired disheartened to the rear, near the bridge of Cassano, gaily placed himself at their head, recrossed the bridge, and then showed them that by throwing themselves into the houses and making battlements, they might keep up a fire that would greatly annoy the enemy's flank. They obeyed him with alacrity; the houses immediately appeared like batteries, and Prince Eugene having been wounded, ordered the Count of Linanges to conduct the retreat, himself setting the example. Thus a handful of men, animated by one determined will, can be led, and may gain what is called a victory over a numerous and well-disciplined army, headed by a general of the greatest talent *. The

* This account is so perfectly conformable to the details given by Feuquières (*Memoirs*, Paris, Rollin, 1740, vol. iv. pp. 7—16), that we may suppose Mirabeau made as much use of them as of his private documents. This is, however, not the case with Saint Simon's account (vol. iv. pp. 399, 400. of the edit. of 1829. Paris, Sautelet), an account totally incorrect, every page of which shows the animosity of the author against the Duke of Vendome. He also makes a mistake in the name of the Marquis John Anthony, whom he calls "Mirebaut."

This same field of battle of Cassano was, ninety-four years later, viz. April 27, 1799, the theatre of an engagement between the Russians and the French. The superiority of numbers of the former, commanded by Suwarrow, gave them the advantage over the French under General Moreau.—*Editor.*

number of killed and wounded was immense *. MM. d'Albergotti and de Saint-Pater, alone, among the colonels and general officers, escaped unhurt. Thirty-two officers belonging to the two battalions of my grandfather's regiment were killed or wounded. Fortunately for him, he wore on that day, according to his usual custom and the manner of the times, a very splendid dress, which served to distinguish him among the dead. He had been stripped, as a matter of course; but the enemy, finding some signs of life in him, carried him to head-quarters, and there threw him again among the heaps of dead. But it was not his fate to die. Villevieille, an officer of his regiment, who had been made prisoner, and was particularly attached to him, thought he knew the body. Having washed off the mud and blood by which it was disfigured, he recognised my grandfather, who showed signs of life. This faithful friend instantly acquainted Prince Eugene with the circumstance. The prince had known him in his youth, and besides, his reputation was great. Eugene gave orders that the greatest care should be taken of him, but as he learnt that an operation was urgent, and as in those times the German surgeons were forbidden to perform any, he sent him back immediately to the French army, without demand-

* Saint Simon mentions among the killed Messrs. de Chaumont, de Moriac, le Chevalier de Fourbin, de Vaudrey, and de Praslin.—*Editor.*

ing any ransom, and sent with him seventeen officers of his regiment.

Now commenced a period of suffering which continued for the remainder of the life of that hitherto powerful, and naturally impatient man. Dumoulin, who afterwards became the most celebrated physician of Paris, was then attached to the army. He performed an operation upon my grandfather, which all the faculty of Europe have constantly considered a phenomenon. Dumoulin, himself, fifty years after, spoke of it in that light. The dreadful musket shot had, as I have already mentioned, separated the jugular vein and nerves. The clotted blood had entirely stopped the bleeding, but this mass could not remain without causing putrefaction. It therefore became necessary to cut his throat, as it were, and introduce into the vessel rolls of lint, leaving nature to perform a miracle and heal herself. My grandfather had preserved all his presence of mind, and indulged in his customary jests. The surgeons conceived it their duty to inform him that if the blood flowed at the moment they removed the rolls of lint, he would be suffocated; and that in ten thousand cases of the kind, there was little probability of even one being successful. He laughed at them, made a kind of military will, and performed his duties as a Christian, asking the priest if he had not some little addition to make to his penance. He, however, afterwards owned to his wife,

that when it became necessary to remove the fatal roll, he looked anxiously at the surgeons, and seeing that they appeared satisfied with the result, he felt easy. There remained, nevertheless, a cruel task still to perform, for the nerves were wounded, shortened, and the bones almost crushed, &c. It was, probably, during these repeated dressings that he had a delirious fever. My father has heard him relate, as a proof of the blind and unbounded devotedness with which the Duke of Vendome knew how to inspire his officers, that during a fit of delirium, one of his whims was to refuse to void his water. His attendants hit upon the expedient of making a person unknown to him, and wearing the uniform of an aid-de-camp of his commanding officer, enter his chamber and order him, as from the Duke, to perform that function of nature. He immediately obeyed. In a word, his situation was such that he was thought dead, and his regiment given to M. de Narbonne, his lieutenant-colonel. The newspapers announced his demise, and his family went into mourning.

His only wish now was to return to France as soon as he could be removed; and he was thus spared the sight of the reverses which in the following campaign compelled us to evacuate Italy. He was obliged to be carried in a litter which still exists at Mirabeau. The expenses of such a journey, and the state he was in, together with his naturally violent, imperious, and im-

patient temper, may easily be imagined. Always self-willed, it was, of course, a difficult task to govern him. He could get no sleep, and he suffered the most excruciating pain. He was at last obliged to take eighty grains of opium every evening in order to sleep. The Barège waters, then recently discovered, effected his cure; and as his fortitude never forsook him, and, according to the polished manners of the times, people kept their ailings to themselves, he soon regained his good looks. He lost, however, the use of his right arm, but he had made a kind of ornament of the black scarf, in which he placed his shattered limb. He was also obliged to wear, for the remainder of his life, a silver collar, in order to keep up his head.

The Abbé Francis of Mirabeau, his uncle, died at this period; and as he had administered the affairs of his nephew in a very injudicious manner, the latter found his fortune, in consequence of so many campaigns and catastrophes, much impaired. This circumstance, however, had no effect upon him.

At that time, pecuniary favours were not lavished upon officers; and this custom, though temporarily resorted to under the regency, dates in reality only from M. d'Argenson's administration, that is, nearly forty years after the period I am now speaking of. A pension was, however, offered him of three thousand livres, in consideration of his services and wounds. He refused it, and wrote in answer that he

had never served but for honour; that although he had spent part of his fortune in the army, it was then the custom to do so, and he had still enough left to prevent him from becoming a burthen to the state. But he asked as an especial favour that this pension might be divided between six captains of his regiment, who had been wounded at the same time he had, and in such a manner as to be unable to follow their profession, which was their only resource. This was granted, and these unfortunate victims of a disastrous war would otherwise not have received the slightest remuneration in those times of pecuniary difficulty. My father has seen one of these officers, wounded at Cassano by a musket shot, which went entirely through his body, making its way through both arms. He retained during the remainder of his life a kind of hiccough from the effects of this wound. His name was Villegenet. The regiment in which my father served, and which had been under the command of his father, passed through Mezières in 1730, whither this officer had retired, broken down, and almost in his dotage. He came to see his beloved colours again, and embrace his former brothers in arms. He was told that a son of his colonel and benefactor served in the regiment. He pressed my father in his arms, and with eyes bathed in tears, uttered the most affecting expressions of love and gratitude. My father found this act of generosity so much honoured in the case

of this unfortunate officer, that all the gifts of princes, particularly gifts in money, would not have afforded him so much satisfaction.

My grandfather went, in 1706, to take the waters at Digne *, and he there found the means of attaining happiness in spite of his infirmities, by the choice he made of the consolatory support, which he preserved for the remainder of his life, against his sufferings, and the effects of that impetuous and violent temper which swayed him, defied all counsel, overcame all resistance, and would have proved very prejudicial to him, if nature had not given him an excellent judgment to counteract his extreme vivacity. He there found Madame de Castellane and her daughter. Of so many branches of this house which have since been called into existence and are now extinct, not one bore the name of Castellane, except the branch of

* It was here that occurred the commencement of an event by which Providence wished to give him the reward of his manly and meritorious actions, the example he had set, and his encouragement of the Christian virtues, for which he had always shown the greatest respect. He was destined, in short, to have a partner of rare merit, in order to maintain his house and perpetuate his race. It was thus fortunate that Providence had endowed him, together with the defects of a decisive and overbearing character, with a lofty, upright, and stedfast reason, which, joined to a mind of a superior cast, exercised, no doubt, its influence both upon himself and upon others, and made him adopt a choice suitable as well to his defects as his good qualities.—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

Castellane-Norantes, which all the others considered the eldest; but with this exception, never was a noble and ancient house so ignorant of its lineage and titles. My grandfather was struck with Mlle. de Castellane's beauty, and still more with her dignified manners and superior sense*, so much so, that he wished to make her his wife, he who had never in his life thought of marrying. She was destitute of

* Notwithstanding her truly extraordinary beauty, this young lady was of a serious and even austere turn of mind. We transcribe, in support of our assertion, a passage from the writings of her son, who constantly mentions his mother.

"There never was a female who possessed at every period of her life a more dignified and imposing air, and yet was more free from every pretension. At twelve and fourteen years of age she fancied she was ugly, because she saw no face that bore any resemblance to hers. At the age of sixteen she was both cited and feared for her seriousness and good sense: she used to say that she always found herself too young or too old for society. Of grave and even retired habits, the most engaging person would not have known how to win her. She said that Marshal Turenne would have proved dangerous to her, and this she has constantly asserted. Having always from her infancy been partial to the society of persons advanced in years, and enjoying a high reputation, she had frequently heard encomiums passed upon this great man with the enthusiasm which he communicated to all who knew him. Married to a man both imposing and highly respectable, and seeing him the object of every one's respect, she had undoubtedly felt her soul elevated. One day a lady gave her to understand that people complained of my father's haughty and impetuous temper, and even pitied her on that account.

"'Ah! Madam,' she replied, 'you would not think so if you knew what happiness it is to be able to respect one's husband!'"— *Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

fortune; he felt that his independence would be the less affected, and her poverty would be made up for by the defects of his temper and his infirmities of body. He enjoyed a great reputation, and was consequently much respected in his province; but his haughty and unbending temper caused him to be also much feared. Innumerable instances were related of his peculiarities, no doubt much exaggerated, as is always the case when people wish to increase a man's celebrity. His style of living, his manners, and his expensive habits, made people fancy him very rich; for he had a great deal of order, and nobody ever meddled with his private affairs.

His suit was well received by the young lady's mother. Fortunately, Mademoiselle de Castellane had an elevated mind. She was one of those women of whom Montluc says, "What virtuous lady would wish to unite herself to a man possessing all his nerves and bones?" I say, fortunately, because her reputation in her province was such, that she had refused several offers much above her natural expectations, without any regard to fortune, and merely because she felt happy at home with her father, whom she tenderly loved. My grandfather's reputation and distinction struck her with admiration.

John Anthony conducted this negociation with all the singularity of his character. He proposed to Mademoiselle de Castellane to marry him without informing

her parents of it, until the day after the ceremony. She replied, that surprise was only proper in war, and the proposal went no further.

She has since told her children, that upon the reports then spread relative to the Marquis of Mirabeau's intentions, Madame de Valavoire, the most illustrious woman of her day, at that time far advanced in years, and extremely attached to Mademoiselle de Castellane, desired to be informed by her of the circumstance, and the young lady was perfectly astonished when her respected friend said to her—

" You have done very wrong."

This excellent woman, observing the astonishment apparent in the countenance of Mademoiselle de Castellane, who was accustomed to look up to her as an oracle, added—

" You ought to have taken him at his word. Nobody doubts his honour, and that he carries probity to extremes. He gave you, in his way, the strongest mark of confidence: he was deserving of your placing yourself on a level with him. Recollect, that if you unite yourself in name and interest to a man like him, nothing in the ordinary routine of life must thenceforward be a rule of conduct for you."

The young lady recollected this advice in after-life; but at that period, notwithstanding the authority of her aged friend, she could not persuade herself that she had done wrong. This reflection, however, proceeded from

a woman of great celebrity, who, fifty years before, had been deemed worthy to supply the place of her husband, wounded at the siege of Valenza in Italy, where he commanded. Being invested with the command by the will of the garrison and inhabitants, she caused the siege to be raised. The observation made by this venerable lady proves the opinion which the most distinguished persons of the province entertained of my grandfather.

His proposal remained without any further result. My grandfather repaired to Paris and Versailles, where the Duke of Vendome presented him to the king, saying, that from the first entrance of the French into Italy, until the evacuation of that country, he had not quitted his arms. The discontent to which this proud unbending soldier was then a prey, induced him to make the following impetuous answer to some remark of the monarch which did not please him—

"Yes, Sir; and if I had quitted my colours, to come hither and bribe some court strumpet, I should have been promoted, and have received fewer wounds."

The dignified monarch, who, more than any one, possessed the power of self-command, addressed some other person; and the Duke of Vendome, when he retired, said to Mirabeau—

"I ought to have known you; henceforward I shall always present you to the enemy, and never to the king."

But Vendome was himself too free-spoken not to tolerate such hasty expressions, which the well-known impatience, the warlike reputation, the daring intrepidity, and the wounds of the man who uttered them must have excused, and even justified, as the noble out-pourings of a just indignation. There never was a man more averse to all restraint, to all etiquette, and more under the sway of his first feelings, than the Duke of Vendome. When he went to his government of Provence, which he did about this time, having perceived, on horseback, near the town of Aix, the deputies of the different companies, dressed in their robes, the fear of long speeches effected more than Prince Eugene and all the enemies of Louis XIV could have accomplished. It put him to flight. He galloped across the fields, and sent word to these gentlemen that his horse was shy, and had run away with him. He arrived at full gallop at Marseilles, where he sought the man whom he deigned to call the "brave Provençal," and alighted at the house of my grandfather, whom he embraced in bed. He told him he came to fetch him to the army.

"Ah! my lord, you have already made me break my arms, my legs, and my neck, and you wish to kill me for the sake of people who do not treat you better than they treat me."

Such was the answer of the discontented censurer, but such censurers were always the first in the field of battle.

His thoughts of finally settling having meanwhile matured in his mind, he quickly concluded matters with the parents of Mlle. de Castellane *, but in his own way. He not only insisted that she should be portionless, but even gave a discharge of all his rights, and would not receive her linen and clothes. These are singularities naturally so dignified that they please every one. He married Frances of Castellane, in the month of May 1708, at the chateau of Norante, the residence of her father. She was then twenty-three years of age, and he was in his forty-second year †.

He brought his wife to Mirabeau, and almost imme-

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* His attachment to Mlle. de Castellane had become a decided passion. I have heard his cousin, Mad. de Saint Michaud (the daughter of Bruno), who then lived at Paris with her father, say that he had become uneasy and sombre. He was much sought after, and every one wished to see him. His answer to the king, at a time when the public impatience was excited, his twenty-seven wounds received all the same day, the miracle of his cure, his military reputation, the exaggerated accounts of his intrepidity and pride, excited universal curiosity. People went to his uncle's to see him; but he refused every advance. His cousin, therefore, hearing him constantly expatiate upon the perfections of Mlle. de Castellane, advised him to marry her, as the only means of restoring him to the ordinary habits of social life.—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

† I have heard my mother say, that as it had been reported she was going to marry an old man, the priest asked, in his presence, if he was the bridegroom, as he did not appear at all old, notwithstanding the disproportion of age and the extraordinary beauty of the bride.—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

diately after set out for the valley of Pougelas, where his regiment was then stationed. He had just been appointed brigadier, but in a general promotion, and the estimation in which the army held him was much above his rank, at a time when military rank was considered something. Notwithstanding his infirmities, and perhaps his discontent, his zeal remained unabated.

At this period, on the death of the Marquis of Forville, provost and governor of Marseilles, the authorities of that city wrote to my grandfather, begging him to apply for this office, and the wealthiest inhabitants offered him funds to pay for it, as it was a purchasable place. He thanked them, and replied, that, having always been the friend of the Marquis of Forville, he would not enter into competition with his nephew; though there can be no doubt that the Duke of Vendome, the governor of the province, would have caused him to be preferred. A report having been spread that the Villeroi family were desirous of selling the estate of La Tour d'Aigues, this rich community itself, and the principal merchants of Marseilles, offered my grandfather funds to purchase it. He declined the offer; for though his fortune was much impaired, he did not feel himself poor, and he was thought wealthy, because his conduct was dignified and independent.

He was fortunate in not following the Duke of

Vendome to Flanders. History will not fail to record the strange and fatal events of the campaign of 1708, where this hero, continually thwarted by the *conscientious* counsels of the Duke of Burgundy, despising an army of flatterers and degraded soldiers, disdaining to be its leader, sometimes yielding to the disgust excited by contradiction, sometimes to the indignation of seeing the enemy gain the most decisive advantages under his very eyes, forfeited at length the general good opinion, and lost the absolute confidence of the king. The man whom he styled in the army "his right hand," would have been out of his sphere amid the partialities occasioned by the dissensions among the generals; and Vendome, who, when an opportunity occurred, had more than once the generous imprudence to exclaim, "Ah! where is my army of Italy!" would have been injudiciously served by the too energetic affection of a man who never would bear the slightest contradiction, unless he felt it to be just, and even then not without an effort.

My grandfather's duty called him, during the winter of 1709, to the army stationed in Dauphiny, where his sense of justice induced him to oppose the Marquis of Broglie, lieutenant-general and comptroller, the senior of all the general officers. This officer enjoyed some favour during the regency, and was Mirabeau's friend. Broglie had determined to ruin d'Angervilliers, at that time intendant in Dauphiny, and who died war secretary. It

formed part of his duty to provide stores for the army, and some one, desirous to show that he had famished the troops in their quarters, had drawn up a statement of his alleged peculations. Broglie, who knew the little respect and esteem in which the Marquis of Mirabeau held all commissaries, requested his signature to this statement.

"I shall first ascertain the facts," answered this upright man, "and when I have made my inquiries, you may rely on me." This demur surprised Broglie, who observed to Mirabeau that the question concerned only a commissary, and that his word was surely good enough to get such a fellow hanged. To this my grandfather replied, "First let us see whether he is worth the rope; for, after all, it must come to the same in the end."

He accordingly made his inquiries, and ascertained that, notwithstanding the soldiers had indeed received but small rations of oatmeal bread, and had really suffered the privations and distress peculiar to that disastrous season, all this had happened without any fault of the commissary, who had all along displayed great zeal and punctuality. He made a good report to the Marquis of Broglie, and the statement was cancelled. He was not acquainted with the commissary, thus falsely accused, and it was only a considerable time after that the latter himself related the circumstance, in answer to a compliment which my grand-

father paid him, according to old military custom, on his being appointed secretary of state.

Although the honesty of d'Angervilliers passed this inquest without any stain, a cry was afterwards raised throughout every regiment of foot against a commissary named Ruel, who became equally famous at a subsequent period, and while my father was still in the service, went by the nickname of " Mr. Cruel." Such men are rarely dismissed, having the art to persuade their superiors not to yield, and that they are interested in supporting them. My grandfather learnt that Mr. Ruel had, as they say, " cut off the arms and legs of the foot-soldiers," who had already sufficiently suffered from the stoppage of their pay, and the badness of their bread and other provisions. He stated his mind, on this occasion, in his usual way. Being one day with Lieutenant-General Dillon, commandant of the district, he publicly denounced Ruel, and promised, wherever he might meet him, to chastise him as the most unprincipled scoundrel who had ever filled a situation of trust. Thereupon one of the by-standers observed, that the marquis had been misinformed.

" Thou art the man, rascal!" said he, rising; " no one else would venture to take his part."

Ruel, for it was he, was now about to fall beneath the terrible left arm of his formidable accuser, but the Marquis of Mison forced my grandfather to forbear, by throwing his arms round his waist, giving Ruel time

to make off at full speed. When review day arrived, Ruel, who would have taken ample vengeance on the regiment, but for the presence of the colonel, stood apart, and seemed hardly to know how to look. As soon as my grandfather saw him, he cried out to him, that if he dared approach, he would have him beaten to death with halberds. Nor would the review have taken place at all, or at best it would have been carried on with speaking trumpets and telescopes, had not the Marquis of Broglie, who was on the ground, and had come thither perhaps to enjoy the sport, for he was fond of such scenes, taken the roll-book, and in his capacity of inspector, signed as for a very complete review, in order to put an end to the business *.

* The various instances we have just recorded evince the violent and ungovernable spirit which John Anthony used to display, even in actions which in themselves were just and praiseworthy. The marquis, his son, who has related many others, which Mirabeau has very properly omitted, thus closes his account of this scene.

" It undoubtedly must appear, and has appeared for some time, that I take pleasure in showing this great man (I do not fear to call him so, and to prove him so, to any judge) in a strange and fearful light; but I owe this homage to truth. I represent, however, only the outside of the man, and his habitual violence, more especially after his wounds and ailments had tried his constitution. In proportion as he was obliging and noble, nay even striking by his polished manners, and amiable and sprightly when he chose to be agreeable, in the same proportion were his indignation and starts of anger dreadful, and his spirit unyielding; but these outward appearances covered a fund of generous and exhaustless goodness, which was always apparent." — *Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

Chamillard was dismissed at this period *, and the news reached the army. It produced, as it always does, a general outcry against the poor man in disgrace. But every one saw with surprise, that my grandfather, who had been so unsparing in his censure of him while he was in office, did not mention his name after his retirement. He replied to those who remarked this reserve—

"When this man held office, his unfitness was prejudicial to the state; I saw it, I said so, and was continually saying so. He is, in other respects, a very worthy man, against whom neither you nor I have any thing to say, since he is no longer in power."

During this campaign he had the command of a detachment to march to the relief of the army in Flanders. It consisted of five battalions and five regiments of dragoons. This march, in the course of which he crossed the kingdom, attracted attention. In spite of his wounds and numerous ailments, occasioned both by his protracted illness and his own impatience, he walked the whole way at the head of his infantry, and assisted with a loan of ten thousand francs, his officers, who felt most severely the rigour of a period which swallowed up every man's means and resources. In his passage through Dauphiny, the marching orders

* 1709. This term is not precise, for Chamillard resigned his two appointments of his own accord, the finance department in 1708, the war department in 1709.—*Editor.*

directed one whole day's march for his men, which he found excessive, and inquiring the reason, he learnt that it was because the route lay through M. de Medavi's privileged pleasure-grounds. This nobleman was commandant of the province, and shortly after was raised to the dignity of Marshal of France. My grandfather found this arrangement unjust, and of his own authority changed the route. He forcibly took up his quarters in some very good villages, caused provisions to be supplied with the greatest order, and then resumed the march.

Dijon claimed the privilege of allowing no soldiers to come within its walls. This impediment obliged the troops, in the most unfavourable weather, to march a league further. My grandfather had the boldness to drive in the sentinels, and traverse a city, which was, he said, "neither a stranger nor a foe." Finally, a field-officer, who had the care of the equipages, having embarked on the Saone in company with some women of doubtful character, and neglected his duty, was cashiered by my grandfather's order at the head of his men, although a brother of the grand almoner. These specimens of character are certainly singular; and I would not be understood as wishing to represent this respectable man in an unfavourable light. But, in the first place, whenever I determine to write, I make it a point of duty to tell the exact truth; and besides, if the general conduct of this hasty man was such as I have

described it, his obliging and elevated soul, his amiable and high-bred qualities and demeanour, served as a counterpoise to his imperious temper, vexatious impatience, and formidable anger. Hence we may gather this useful lesson, that liberality of heart covers faults which the most artful manners cannot disguise; and that it is rather by the feelings within than by the most plausible appearances that people of a good and daring disposition are to be won. It is but too true that man desires a master, and can never honour and serve any but his superior; but to play the latter part is not easy, and I am not sure that success is to be obtained where great natural benevolence is wanting.

Louis XIV, having exhausted his own means, and those of his subjects, could only just sustain his imposing dignity by carefully watching the expenses of his household, and submitting to the strictest economy. A formidable reputation, whether in good or evil, is almost equally alarming to a difficult and unstable government; and a disgust for men of too determined a character is unintentionally entertained. Still, when the merit remains, it frequently arises from the absence of certain qualities, those especially which have the effect of subduing fortune. If my grandfather missed the fortune he would have valued, it was only because he left the service at the moment when he could not have failed to obtain it. We desire to have men complete, if not perfect, without stopping to inquire whether

we have, or can have, a fixed idea of perfection, and whether lofty mountains do not imply deep valleys.

My grandfather became weary of his profession, and a thousand circumstances contributed to this feeling. He pleaded, above all things, his state of health, which no longer allowed him to serve as usefully as heretofore. The affection of his deserving wife undoubtedly had a share in the resolution he adopted, and the state of his affairs completed his determination. Many noble fathers make war as they would seize on an inheritance; but he was not one of these.

The campaign of 1710, in Flanders, completed his disgust. My father has been told by old Marshal Duras, who was there, and whose language was not free from the accent of the wine-shop, "that the drummers of the army in Italy would have disdained to drink with the lieutenant-generals of the army in Flanders." This was the exaggerated and whimsical expression of the common opinion founded upon facts. It is easy to anticipate the effect such a parallel must have produced upon a distinguished officer. He did not disguise his indignation, and his opportunities for making it public were pretty frequent.

One day he had to command a foraging party. He was early at the place of rendezvous, and put himself at the head of his men. There came to him a man, from the Marquis of Puységur, and said that such was the object of the business, such the plan of the enclosure,

the right here, the left there, frequently mixing up with his story the words "you must." Unluckily, this verb was repugnant to the listener; and he had never heard "you must" addressed to him without compelling the utterer to retract it. For once, the whole speech appeared so new to him, that he contained himself, and coolly asked his abrupt adviser who he was.

"Sir," he replied, "I am aide-de-camp to the Marquis of Puységur, and am sent hither with his orders."

"And who is this Marquis of Puységur?"

The officer's amazement was overwhelming. The Marquis of Puységur, who was at that time an officer of considerable merit and great reputation, and who died marshal of France, was in reality a highly respected quarter-master-general; and in a large inactive army, such a man is for the most part the pivot upon which the whole turns. General officers without end, ignorant and lazy, who show themselves five or six days in the year to the army, and call that serving a campaign, who fear nothing so much as that their turn may come at last to be present at some skirmish, are quite delighted when anything is apparently confided to their management, that is to say, when they are taught their letters. The army of Flanders was more than usually in this predicament; so that it had become a rule for the Marquis of Puységur to set them their tasks. In this instance, however, he had applied to the wrong person.

"Sir," said this untractable scholar, with emphasis,

" go and tell M. de Puységur to be ———— ; and as for you, another time I hope you will be more apt in distinguishing apprentices."

The matter did not rest here. After the forage was collected, my grandfather openly undertook to carry the thing further, by asking, with dumbfounding jocoseness —" How much have we to pay the CICERONE of the army, that clear-sighted man, who, from his bed, takes upon himself to teach general officers how to distinguish their right hand from their left ?"

Puységur, who perhaps was not a remarkable man, but careful, prudent, and temperate, sent him a polite and conciliatory message, urging as an excuse a notion he entertained that as M. de Mirabeau was capable of serving as a guide through Italy, he, who had always served in Flanders, might be able to give him some information respecting that country. My grandfather replied, that in the gratuitous instructions given to him, less mention was made of the country, than of the employment and direction of the troops under his command ; that it was true these things depended in a great measure on the ground ; but that, without assuming to be a quarter-master, he had always made it a point, when performing his actual duty, to study his future duties, by which means he had become perfectly well acquainted with the country ; that, on the other hand, he had never in his life taken any advice, or received any command, without retaining the right to

do exactly the reverse, if he saw occasion; that it was thus they served in Italy, and if they cringed in Flanders, it was wrong to send him there; that after all, he had not implicitly believed that M. de Puységur was stupid enough to want to teach him anything, but in the noise he made, had no other object than to show the generals serving in the army of Flanders, the servility to which they had freely submitted *.

We fancy, as we relate these incidents, that we hear the pedants of the present day observe, that modern discipline would have been fully able to subdue such men as these. As it is impossible to bring before them the formidable impression which Medusa's head would probably make upon them, we beg them to consider that brave men are required in the army; that when such men are, moreover, enlightened by nature, by thirty years' experience, and by their constant presence in the field of battle;—when they are endowed with a form which at once is awful to the enemy, and encouraging to their own men;—when they are distinguished for decision, and are still more hasty than even they are reputed to be;—finally, when they are covered with honourable scars, and proud of a noble independence,

* Besides the vehemence of a proud spirit, another circumstance will serve to explain this rebuke to the Marquis of Puységur. The latter was the sworn enemy of the Duke of Vendôme. See Saint Simon, vol. vii. page 162, etc. edit. 1829. Paris. Santelet.—*Editor.*

we must, whatever we be, either take them or leave them. The necessity of the case urges us to take them, and there is but one way of doing so, which was that of the Duke of Vendôme and his ancestor, Henry IV. To leave them, however, was the mode followed by M. de Puységur, as it is by all those wiseacres who have no kingdoms to lose or win.

The death of the general*, to whom my grandfather was most warmly attached, and who valued him above every other officer in the army, would alone have sufficed, at any other period, to disgust him with the service; but the appearance and manœuvres of the army in Flanders filled the measure of his dislike. He at that time commanded the Alsacian brigade, and he always spoke afterwards with the highest esteem of that fine foreign regiment. But so insignificant was the campaign, in such little estimation did he hold the commander of the army, the much-extolled Marshal Villars, whom he very properly looked upon as a blusterer, a mere quack, that he took the resolution no longer to witness the disgrace which so numerous an army had to endure. Nevertheless, he did not withdraw till after he had seen the fruitless attempt to relieve Douai, and felt convinced that nothing would be achieved during the campaign. My father has heard him say, that while the army was in the act of

* Vendôme died at Tignaroz, on the 11th June, 1712, aged 58. —*Editor.*

retiring, after having approached Prince Eugene's lines and after having suffered this important town to be taken, though defended by an immense train of artillery, he saw Marshal Villars parading along the column, in his post-chaise, singing an air of one of the operas of the day.

This levity, after so recent and disgraceful a check, shocked my grandfather so much, that he set off next day, without taking leave of the brilliant commander, whose affected gaiety formed his chief merit with the soldiers. My father has since heard M. Duparquet, who had great elegance of manners, and was much sought after at Paris, relate an adventure which my grandfather's return occasioned, and this anecdote will bear evidence of that eccentricity of character maintained in private life by the man whom we have endeavoured to make known.

"In the year 1710," said M. Duparquet, "I had left the army on leave of absence, and was forced on the road to make room for a man, on horseback like myself, but who was attended by several servants and some led horses. He was a tall, well-looking man, with a haughty military air.

"'Young man, come hither,' said he, after having examined me. I obeyed.

"'Are you not a grey musqueteer?'

"'I am, Sir.'

"'I remembered the uniform saddle-cloth of the

company,' he said. 'I belonged formerly to that corps. They were good for nothing then, and I doubt if they are much better now. What think you?'

"I replied that the gentleman was a good judge of physiognomy. He then asked me whither I was going? I replied, that, having been unwell, I was sent home to recruit my health.

"'And where is your home, pray?'

"'At Montelimart.'

"'So much the better, I am going thither also, and you shall be my escort.'

"I thanked him very warmly. I was not so stupid then, as I am now, because I was much poorer. I understood pretty readily that I had said St. Julian's prayer. He ordered his servants to remove the bag fastened behind my saddle, and I jogged along side by side with this old gentleman, who from that moment assumed as much authority over me as if he had been my father. On arriving at an inn, to which his cook and retinue had preceded us*, his servants, after their master's example, gave themselves the airs of masters among their equals. The host held the stirrup, silver absolutely poured among the chamber-

* Besides horses of every description, he had twelve mules and a chariot with six oxen, his silver plate, an excellent and good-looking steward, a butler, and all the implements of cookery, with medicines for his attendants.—*Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.* —*Editor.*

maids; then followed a good supper with the old gentleman's own wine. I was merry, because he desired me to be so. There was agreeable conversation, and pleasant stories were told. In a word, I got drunk, was carried to bed, and early next morning he sent to know how I had passed the night. I tried to look abashed; but he did not heed me. He sent for me to breakfast, but I had no appetite, which he did not notice. We travelled every day without stopping for refreshment until evening; I was sent to bed every night in the same state, and in this manner we crossed the kingdom from Flanders to Dauphiny, always faring in the same style: I constantly carried to bed, and as constantly called up at break of day, wondering in my own mind how it happened that this man, who made every one bend to him, was known at every inn in France, and was every where received as if he were the governor of the province. For my own part, I had forgotten my own identity, and felt myself nothing else than his aid-de-camp, his servant, his slave, or whatever you please. In fact, I never saw any man so fully obeyed: his attendants, nay, his very horses, all followed his eye, for he had lost almost all his fingers! At length I began to feel that the air of Dauphiny and the neighbourhood of home restored me a little to myself; and, as we drew near to Montelimart, I told him I hoped he would honour me by accepting a lodging with my family, and thus enable them to show my gratitude. He replied

that he should certainly see them, were it only to give a good account of me; but he was then weary, every thing was ready at the inn, and his first intention was to go to bed. I durst not press the matter. We arrived, and I asked his permission to leave him for a moment, in order to go and embrace my parents. 'No,' said he; 'supper is ready, I must take a mouthful before I go to bed; after which you may join your family, who will never complain of your considering the evening as a tail to the day's journey.'

"I was forced to obey, make a hearty supper, prate about the ladies of Montelimart, and drink their healths, until I met my usual fate; and thus my family was balked for one day more. I was put to bed, but for this once, I was allowed to sleep it out; and when starting up next morning, I asked for the Marquis, I was told that he had departed two hours before, having paid my share of the reckoning, and leaving me quite ashamed to have to go and confess to my dear parents that I had been fifteen or twenty hours in the town, and had got drunk, before I could find time and obtain permission to come and pay my duty to them!"

Such were the external manners of this extraordinary man, who, in the prime of life and almost within certain reach of the proudest military honours, withdrew from public life. Some years previously, he had seen in Languedoc a man meanly attired, with a ruddy

face and red wig, superintending a few workmen who were building a dry stone wall. This man was M. de Pérignan, who then resided on his estate. "Had any body then foretold," said he, "that, thirty-five years after, I should see this man, without stirring from his estate, become a duke and peer, and assume the blue riband, whilst I, after having had my arms, legs, and neck broken in the service, should come at last to build dry stone walls in my turn, how astonished I should have been!"

M. de Pérignan afterwards became the first Duke of Fleury; he was the father of the present duke, whom the cardinal selected from his family to make him bear the family name. He sent for him from his estate, where he used to get drunk with the village farrier. One or two badges of honour were put upon his coat, and another generation was thus rendered illustrious in his family.

The decline of my grandfather's strength, the disappointment of his military ambition, the disordered state of his affairs, and his affection for his wife, determined him to sell his regiment, and leave the service.

"I have never," said he to the king, "obtained but one favour from Your Majesty, that of giving my regiment away before I die; I shall never ask Your Majesty but for one more—permission to sell it."

It has been asserted that after permission to dispose of his regiment had been granted, the king was

so struck on beholding in the gallery of Versailles, his lofty stature, his black sling, and his large eyes, the expression of which was seldom mild, that he intimated to him that, his business being over, he was to withdraw. The fact is neither true nor likely. Louis XIV was not uncivil, nor can any one lose the royal favour, without having deserved to lose it. True it is that the term "out of favour" has since been employed in the council chamber, with reference to my father, who was not more of a courtier than his predecessor; but that happened under Louis XV, in whose reign the proprieties of a court were very differently understood. But Louis XIV strictly observed them, and on no account would have disgraced a good officer.

Far from losing favour, my grandfather was the subject of a very high compliment. During the two following campaigns, official letters were sent to him, entitling him to serve under M. D'Argenson, who commanded the army in Dauphiny. He might have used them, have received his pay, have remained at home, and yet have enjoyed all the credit of serving. He could not, however, brook any kind of compromise which offended his sensitiveness. He, therefore, sold his commission to the Marquis of Gensac, and turned his whole thoughts to the settlement of his affairs, living in a very wild retreat, upon a cliff, which barred a double mountain gorge, continually lashed by the north wind. To this mode of life, so entirely new to him,

he devoted all his energies, and was a benefactor to the whole country. For there was a generous and fatherly kindness inseparable from his military system of police, which was still very singular.

He availed himself of a kind of awe inspired by his military fame and undaunted courage, exaggerated by report, to establish tranquillity in a part of the country where the vicinity of a parliament, and a discontented community, encouraged and fostered a host of itinerant attorneys and provincial lawyers. He gave out that he had orders to drown in the bateau * all who attempted to practise mischievous subtleties. One lawyer, more incautious and more greedy than his brethren, was bold enough to risk the attempt, and opened an office at the Grand-Logis at Mirabeau †. Thereupon my grandfather told one of his suite to rid him of that man. The servant, having been instructed what to do, descended from the cliff with one of his comrades, and, on pretence of drinking, took up his quarters in the same house. A country attorney is not apt to run away from the mere noise of glasses. He, therefore, approached, and began to converse with the new guests. However, the two began to drink, then to speak without restraint, then to assert, then to disagree, then to dispute, and from

* The ferry-boat of Mirabeau, on the Durance, at the base of the rock.—*Editor.*

† An inn, situated half a league from the castle, on the road to Gap, Sisteron, and Manosque, leading to Marseilles.—*Editor.*

harsh words proceeded to threats. The attorney reminded them of the conduct and respect due to sociability: but when men are once heated with wine, to argue with them only makes them worse. The two servants were gradually excited, and at last came to blows; but these they dealt with so little skill, that whilst the adviser was endeavouring to prove himself a friend to both parties, he received from both sides the perquisites due to the adverse party. Every blow fell upon him. Every thump brought him an apology; yet hard knocks fell so thickly about his ears, that he was soon covered with bruises. This comic scene was a lesson for him and the whole tribe of lawyers, and nothing more was seen of them.

Another transaction made my grandfather pay up the debts of the community of Mirabeau to the king, in a singular manner. He used to charge his wife with all the details of his lands, as well as with those of his household. A man came and claimed from her a small balance of taxes, which had been forgotten. This individual raised his voice, which was unusual, and the owner of the castle having been brought out by the noise, the man fled. A few days after he sent a summons, which was still more irritating. My grandfather knew that the man was treasurer to the magistracy, and that at bottom he was right; so he took patience, and put the fox's skin over his customary armour. He ordered the parish accounts to be brought to him,

discovered them to be unsettled, and even overladen with debts, as they all were in those exhausted times. He made himself master of the customs and regulations, detected double payments, surcharges, manœuvres, and numerous instances of oppression. He commenced proceedings against the man; and no sooner was it known that he was the leader of this insurrection, than memorials were sent to him from every quarter, with the notes of the different parishes in the district; in a word, he pursued the matter so eagerly and so closely, that the poor man was driven to seek friends to solicit my grandfather's forbearance. The Marquis of Mirabeau could not refuse to listen to the recommendation of the Marquis of Pontevès-Buous, his first cousin, a nobleman very much respected throughout the province, nor to the entreaties of Madame de Valavoire, who was esteemed by all Europe; but it was settled that the treasurer should give the parish a discharge for 16,000 francs, which it owed him, principal, arrears, and interest. After this the poor wretch left the country.

So active and respected a proprietor soon succeeded in changing the face of the whole neighbourhood. His large estates, as in all ruined countries, were inhabited by idle vicious colonists. To render them diligent, all at once, he set about some very difficult and tedious works. He undertook to turn into an orchard a mountain of rocks near the castle. He set some to break the rocks, others to carry off the stones, with which he

enclosed a large piece of ground with a very thick wall of dry stone. Others were directed to bore holes in the rock to plant four thousand olive trees. The most robust men were employed at the rudest labour, armed with iron stakes and enormous clubs. The women, and even the children, carried stones from place to place; and these labours, which were punctually executed, never ceased till harvest time; the master being always at their head, in all weathers, which are sometimes frightful in those parts. He had a hard beginning; but this rigour very soon produced its fruit: there were no more domestic broils, no gaming, no more drunkenness, no more beggary. Property was more respected, families less wretched, and the benevolent proprietor soon gave his tenants, in the form of an easy quit-rent and at long leases, very good lands to clear, by which they were able to support themselves. These are amongst the highest duties a landowner can fulfil, and perhaps none are more meritorious. At all events, all that a wealthy man can do, or ought to do, is to turn the qualifications with which nature has endowed him to as good an account as possible for those among whom it is his destiny to live*. His duties

* There is a passage in the private memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau, which proves that his father, when executing these works, displayed the authority of the lord quite as much as he did the watchfulness and kindness of the patron.

"Not one of his tenants could, on any account, stay from his

as a father were as punctually fulfilled in his own house. He had six sons and one daughter. All the younger sons he took care to have received knights of Malta whilst under age, which proved a most heavy charge to him, inasmuch as the payment of their passage out happened precisely at a time when the great, sudden, and repeated changes in the currency *, by which the unstable regency was agitated, when the artifices of the Bank to sustain the *System*, and the consequence of the almost incalculable debts and liabilities in which Louis XIV had plunged the nation, had absolutely ruined the finances of France.

He gave himself up entirely to these arrangements, with the ardour and perseverance he displayed in all his actions. He had thoughts of settling at Paris, whither some remains of ambition still urged him to go. The Marquis of Broglie invited him thither in the regent's name, and every thing seemed to promise him the reward of his services, and the most speedy promotion. Fate, however, ordained otherwise. At

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work, unless he was ill, and in that case he received assistance, or was allowed to work on his own land: on this point my father was very scrupulous, and none dared deceive him."—*Editor.*

* They used to make their payments to the Order of Malta in Spanish piastres or pistoles. Our own coin being debased and altogether suspected, that of other countries bore an excessive price. But this excellent parent, ever heedful of his duties, had too deeply felt the value of independence not to obtain it for his children, and he would not suffer them to lose even the period of childhood.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

first a thousand foolish cavils detained him at home, where he was forced to make many prior arrangements necessary to a removal. A legal report relative to some encroachments on the Beaumont estate having excited the attention of a lover of law-suits, this man roused the whole community—no difficult matter, in the state of the municipal and judicial order, or rather disorder, by which we are governed. His right was soon apparent, and a speedy settlement was expected; but it was necessary to drive chicanery from all her hiding places. My grandfather, unused to this business, but who applied to it all his wonted activity and energy, obtained eight successive judgments, and concluded the affair by pardoning the guilty, and not making use of any of his advantages.

Meanwhile, much time had been wasted in these fastidious law-suits, and the year 1718 had come, with the dreadful shocks which were to follow. In these times of sudden and insane fluctuations in the currency, a thing valued only six francs was raised next day to forty-eight. The payment of rents stopped all at once, because, when the debtor desired to pay, the creditor would not take his money, and when the latter wished to receive the former was loath to pay. Then followed bills, papers, bankruptcies, disorder, and despair, the usual concomitants of excessive stock-jobbing.

Suddenly it was whispered about that the plague had appeared, and was beginning to spread. The

alarm it occasioned was terrible, and every passage was closed. It was but too true that the horrible scourge was coming on. My grandfather was not a man to fly from it. He knew the adage, "war in town, and plague in the country." The castle of Mirabeau was easily fastened and defended. He ordered the walls and gates of the village to be rebuilt; and having stored the castle, he wanted to leave his wife and children in it, whilst he threw himself into Marseilles, his old residence, which the governor, the judge, and the corporation had just forsaken to all the unspeakable horrors of contagion and anarchy. These immediately called every crime into action, and converted that city into a scene of atrocity, ascribed to a strange ferment in the air. The Marchioness of Mirabeau, who had long been unwell, and was overcome by so much additional anxiety, whether she had no strength left, or whether this last stroke of generosity, so natural to an energetic man, aware of his powers and who sees his opportunity, was beyond the fortitude of a tender mother:—the Marchioness of Mirabeau refused to comply with his wish, and determined to follow him, leaving their children to the care of the household servants and vassals. Her husband yielded: if a fault *, it was one which morality will forgive.

* "He would not have yielded even to my mother, had he not been called away by an imperative duty. Towards the close of the year 1730, the regiment in which I served being then stationed in

He ordered every gate but one to be walled up, and at the one he had left he stationed a city guard. After this he opened his house to as many fugitives as it would contain, and withdrew with his wife and family to Gap, in Dauphiny, where great excite-

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the Cévennes, my mentors were afraid I should catch the small-pox, as it happened to be virulent in those parts. They therefore sent me to my aunt, Madame d'Estoublon, at Arles. This lady, through a like apprehension, sent me on to Mirabeau, where my father then resided. When he had examined all my credentials : ' To fly,' said he, ' whatever be the reason, when a man has a duty to perform, forms no part of the principles I have inculcated, and which I am resolved you shall imbibe; but since you have deserted your colours, a subaltern must not abandon them till he has brought back two men. When you have accomplished this, you shall have leave to go.' "—*Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

Let us not deceive ourselves: this proud language agreed with the manners of the times, as well as with the character of the man, whose sensibility, on the other hand, was the more acute, because he was anxious to conceal it.

" In 1728 he lost, through a fatal accident, my eldest brother, who already held a commission in his old regiment, and was a young man of the greatest promise. My father, who, in spite of his rude outward appearance, was full of feeling, and strongly attached to his children, had been very deeply affected by the death of the youngest; and he took it the more to heart, because, according to the rules and manners of men of his description, nothing must be seen, and proofs of affection would have borne the censure of weakness. My mother, whether from principle or from habit, had adopted the same apparent insensibility. They used to shut themselves up in their oratory, and make their appearance afterwards with countenances beaming with serenity. But nature never concedes any thing, and this time my father became seriously ill."—*Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

ment prevailed. Here he succeeded in restoring order without the use of letters patent of command, which he refused.

As if the convulsions of nature had not sufficed, the madness of the government completed the distress of this almost ruined country. The crisis of the *System* was at its most deadly period. The monstrous decrees which those mischievous orgies occasioned created still more disorder in the provinces than in the metropolis, where every species of absurdity existing in a mass, served in a measure to counteract one another. The edicts, which authorised all descriptions of payment in paper absolutely discredited, and obliged the people to accept it, could not but engender, in a poor, and consequently interested and turbulent district, injustice, cruel animosity, spoliation, war, and general consternation. It was this torrent of evil and disaster which my grandfather arrested in the country in which he had selected an asylum during this fit of national epilepsy; and I must ever consider the civic triumph he obtained, and of which may-be not a vestige now remains, as one of the most splendid, or, at least, one of the most deserving actions of his life *.

* An anecdote still remains which will serve to illustrate this point. I cannot recall it without emotion, and I wish to save it from oblivion by giving it a place in these Memoirs.

During this universal struggle between interest and equity, an example occurred which might have led the whole country astray.

Thus it happens that one man is sometimes able to revive the virtue of a whole country by the power of

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The Marquis of Rocheblave, a young man much respected up to that time, and who had married Mademoiselle Dillon, the daughter of an officer under whom my grandfather had served, having long lived on the most friendly terms with his sisters, had cooled in his affection in consequence of some altercations on pecuniary matters. His sisters, badly advised, had irritated him; and he gave them notice that he had just deposited in bank notes the whole amount of their dowers. These wretched women, thus ruined and reduced to want, excited the most sincere pity; but those who would fain have followed the example of such a man as the Marquis of Rocheblave, or called themselves his friends, defended his cause by pleading his large family. This occurrence was about to produce the most injurious consequences throughout the country.

The Marquis of Rocheblave came one day to visit my grandfather, and the conversation turned upon the distresses of the times. My grandfather, whose eloquence carried all before it, deplored the events and circumstances which had engendered among men, vices that never would have existed but for the combined effects of disappointed hopes and over-excited fears. Then, as if he were mentioning the case of a friend, he went on to say—

"During the sacking of a town, taken by storm, every one exclaims 'Unless I plunder I shall be plundered; unless I kill I shall be slaughtered; unless I destroy I shall be surprised; every one does so, why should not I? Besides, I have risked all, lost all, and I must retrieve my losses.' Thus, the greatest crimes are the consequences of the first steps, yet the first steps were involuntary, nay compulsory. A debtor pays me; all my property falls, in my hands, into bits of straw; I have a right to profit by the same law which plunders me to get rid of my creditors, who, after all, will lose every thing. He who has nothing and owes nothing has lost his means of existence as well as his right. My brothers received their shares from me in a tangible form. Now, this deterioration in value of a fifth, or a sixth, is become the half of what I have left. Is it not fair that each should bear his part of the law's curse?

speech, when his conduct and his rank have earned for him the general confidence. Besides, this talent of

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If my mother's house had been destroyed, would she not have been a sharer in the loss? The case is in point; and I may pay her widow's pension, and her claims in the same manner, the more so, as I have begotten children on the reliance of my former possessions, which children are still young, and I owe them substantial aid. Thus, from argument to argument, from need to need, from gulf to gulf, supported by an assumed multitude of savage instances, we forget, we repel, we break, we sever every tie; we abjure honour, virtue, conscience, and at length nature herself. We are left alone, we would shun our very selves; we feel ourselves to be the hideous satellites of an insane and barely acknowledged law; we become citizens without law, men without faith, gentlemen without honour, landlords without credit or reputation; marks for scandal, comrades for the profligate, fratricides, parricides, and every thing that is bad. We tremble at our loneliness; we fear our own thoughts, and we strive in vain to call back the fanciful chain of false reasonings and vile examples that lead us astray."

"Ah! Sir," exclaimed Rocheblave, in dismay, "you don't know to whom you speak."

"To you, Sir, who are not thus wretched, and are incapable of so criminal a weakness; to you who feel the same horror at this picture that I do."

"Alas! I am exactly in this very predicament!"

"You, Sir! I could thrust my hand into the fire rather than believe it. I have seen mankind long enough to know them well, and you have a countenance which was never made to deceive. I say once more I would be your surety. But should it indeed turn out that you have reason to be anxious on your own account—since your heart honours me with a confidence which I know how to prize, condescend to open it entirely, and let me know the wretches who have urged you to such an extremity that you cannot look without alarm on the evils that must ensue."

"Ah! Sir, if you knew all the bad ——"

"But towards whom, Sir? Say, I conjure you!"

conciliation was a real gift in the venerable man whose character and deeds we are attempting to

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"My own sisters!"

"You relieve me, Sir. I began to fear you would be driven to show generosity to some narrow-minded wretch, who makes it painful to practice even virtue for his benefit. But misunderstandings between members of the same family never last long in a heart like yours, when restored to its natural feelings. You will not listen to execrable advice; you are too noble to reduce your own sisters to beggary!"

"I hope so. They should, however, have known me better. It was only to oblige them to do me justice that I wanted to make them undergo the trial of dependence, without intending to make an ill use of it."

"You deceived yourself, by first courting disparagement in order to have an opportunity of forgiving others. Nature, Sir, has marked out the limits of the dependence which ought to exist between your sisters and you; and not only nature, but that excellent law by which your birth and rights have been secured. The odious law which they want to turn against yourself, is no law in the estimation of a conscientious man like you. The king, or the government in his stead, has no authority to subvert the nature of things. An unjust decree is nothing other than the law of the strongest. You are the natural protector of your sisters; you cannot invoke the law to injure them; but in its place let your kindness substitute another law, that they may love you for your generosity, and be grateful for your virtue, which would not suffer even temptation to pollute so noble a heart. Come, Sir, since you have thought me worthy of being your comrade in arms and opinions, allow me to take upon myself to restore you to peace and happiness."

Here they were interrupted by the entrance of the bishop, a very worthy man, and an exemplary and zealous pastor, whom the Marchioness of Mirabeau had sent for, on the arrival of the Marquis of Rocheblave. The conversation had taken a favourable turn.

"Ah! sir," said the young man to the bishop, "you see before you

pourtray *. Not that he was particularly fitted for the duties of an umpire, an employment so laudable and so worthy of him. Such duties require much patience in their fulfilment, and this virtue had not been granted to my grandfather. Besides, a certain portion of bad faith is sure to be mixed up with

a penitent sinner, who owes his contrition to this respectable man!" The bishop had summoned Rocheblave's sisters to attend also. They rushed into their brother's arms. But our judges were too well acquainted with the force of emotion and its short existence to give evil suggestions time to return. Every detail of the business had been previously discussed, every thing was now settled. A notary was called in. Shame, regret, and honour made all parties compliant. Every proposal was agreed to, drawn up, and signed. Each returned to the drawing-room with a radiant countenance. The fame of this reconciliation added to the public feeling, and the force of example put an end to such iniquitous proceedings.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* "I heard more than once, when a child, the story related of an old canon, a regular resident at Perthuis, whom my father overawed to such a degree, that he induced the good man to sign an agreement, which the canon, in his blindness, believed disadvantageous. On leaving the house, he kept pacing up and down a public walk, and telling the story of one 'cured against his will.' Some one accosted him to inform him that one of his fair penitents was waiting for confession. The angry priest, vexed at this interruption, before he had rounded his period, turned towards the messenger, exclaiming—

"'Let her wait; let her wait;' and proceeded with his story. A moment after there came a second message of the same nature. The poor priest resigned himself to his fate; but, turning towards the company, he said—

"'I am going, but shall impose a penance she won't soon forget.' Thus it was that a poor cracked conscience had to endure the spite due to a vehement arbitrator."—*Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

every contention. I do not allude merely to that which makes us the dupe of our own fancies; but to that also by which we strive to persuade others. To speak out boldly, it is not only bad faith, but falsehood, a vice so repugnant to his exalted mind, that he would have become an adversary, an inexorable foe, to any knave who had trifled with him. When, however, he saw on both sides that there was nothing to blame but stubbornness, he took up the business with a resolution to succeed. But he took these pains only for his best friends, whom his conscience recommended to him as belonging to his jurisdiction. His heart was too sensitive to beat for every one.

The shock the *System* had sustained was more severely felt by him than by any other. He held at the time, contracts to the amount of three hundred thousand francs, upon the Hotel de Ville at Paris. These securities became payable like any other sort. Confined to his residence by the plague, he could not go in person to see to those financial fluctuations, which exceeded anything ever known before, and puzzled the most skilful. The Marquis of Castellane, his brother-in-law, was living at Paris. He was attached to the Regent's court, and his wife was lady in waiting to the Duchess of Orleans. My grandfather applied to his brother-in-law to dispose of his bills due, and the latter purchased shares with the amount. The Marquis of Castellane, the most unskilful man of his day, was

borne away by the same tide that carried off so many others. After shares came bills, with the awful rapidity which at this fatal period submerged every fortune in France. The Marquis of Castellane, knowing all the secrets of the Palais Royal, was playing the same game as the court, and had friendly monitors, who warned him in time. He confessed as much to his brother-in-law, but my grandfather never reproached him. Castellane was secretly advised that the bills were going to fall, and that he ought immediately to convert them into cash, whatever might happen on 'Change. He even went to the Rue Quincampoix, the head-quarters of stock-jobbing rabble, with the intention of selling, on his own account, as well as on that of his brother-in-law. At the present time, when surprising progress has been made in the artifices of stock-jobbing, we know that by means of the legerdemain practised by the Coryphæi of this species of gambling, declines are constantly preceded by false reports, which occasion a rise in those effects about to disappear. Very particular pains had been taken to ensure this result at a time when every one was the dupe of the same fallacies, and when each, too anxious to practice deceit, assisted in increasing the general delusion, or rather the universal mania. That day, for ever memorable in the records of madness, was the very day the bill folly reached its climax. The general enthusiasm caught the Marquis of Castellane, who had come on purpose to take advantage of it, having

been well warned to that effect. Instead of turning his own paper into specie, he purchased bills, and sacrificed his own and my grandfather's shares. The warning was just: the bills fell a few days after, with natural rapidity, since their decline must have been in proportion to their circulation, and my grandfather found himself in possession of three hundred thousand francs in stock of no value, except by the decree just mentioned, and of which he would have abhorred to take advantage, although he was greatly in debt. These bills remained stagnant in his hands; they are now in my father's library, and we look upon them as our best title-deeds.

My father relates, in his historical eulogy upon his mother, the resolution then adopted by this exemplary couple. With what delicacy and honourable confidence did the husband consult his wife as to the measures to be adopted! With what noble, true, and unaffected sympathy did that excellent woman justify so high a proof of esteem, without mistaking the motive of this deference, or taking credit for a feeling which she appeared to pretend to have created, without leaving it for a moment to be doubted that the course for a virtuous man to take was already unchangeably fixed! We feel a pleasure when we meet in history with such examples of generosity and disinterestedness. We admire them, and they move us; and, although each reader singles out only those points which accord with his own disposition, still the most narrow mind cannot

but feel that generosity is the root of virtue, true greatness, and real glory, things which it is useless to ask of fortune. These historical examples stand out in bold relief, and become celebrated; they have both witnesses and admirers, bound by interest and gratitude. Those who have made such sacrifices retain the glory of a great action, besides the moral benefit which may thence accrue. But in the case I have just mentioned, everything was to be given up, from no motive but honesty, without obliging any individual, without a single witness to the deed. It was necessary to pass from straitened circumstances to actual poverty; for an income of fifteen thousand livres, drawn out of a fortune which had been exhausted by thirty years' warfare, made it impossible in future that my grandfather should stir out, to go whither he was summoned, to obtain the reward of his services, in the promotion, favours, and even indemnities, readily bestowed on eminent officers, who were at hand, and had sustained any loss by the *System*. It was necessary to forego all such advantages, or else borrow, and live upon expectation. What an alternative to propose to a man of such a character! It was his fate to have to give up everything, when he began to see a large and grown-up family about him. He was reduced to shut himself up for life on a rock, in order to liquidate debts which he might have annulled in a day, consisting of legacies to

hospitals, debts due to persons unknown, many of whom would not have scrupled to have paid their own debts with the valueless stock.

" Never mind," he used to say, " the end of it would have been, that the last creditor would have had to give real value for them, and the injustice would certainly have begun at my door." So he paid nobody with his bills, but kept them, and resigned himself to his fate.

It afterwards appeared, in his private affairs, how much can be effected by perseverance, order, and regularity. He lived scarcely seventeen years after this period, yet he always maintained a creditable appearance; and within that space of time he not only paid his debts, liquidated all the claims upon his house, and defrayed the expenses of his sons to Malta, but at his death he left contracts for two hundred thousand francs upon the town of Marseilles, the province, and a few private individuals. Now, we must observe that his savings could not multiply of themselves, for at that time it was a principle that those debts which were payable at stated periods, and the capital of which was invested, could not, in fairness, bear interest; and it will be easily supposed that such a man would think that in money matters, whatever affected his conscience*

* " After his retirement, he continued to live in a very prudent manner. According to theological tenets, he ought either to have embarked in business, or in some undertaking, in order to draw an

would likewise affect his honour. His money therefore remained inactive in the hands of his trustee, until he had amassed sufficient to make a payment or a compensation.

Being from that period settled in his own province, Vintimille, archbishop of Aix, and M. Le Bret, first president and intendant, entreated him to turn his attention to municipal matters, and allow himself to be appointed chief procurator of the province. He resisted these offers with firmness, and answered, playfully—

"You both honour me with some esteem, and I respect you quite as much. If I held this office for a fortnight, by that time you would think me a madman, and I, if I durst, should take you both for knaves. So let us remain as we are; charity will thereby gain something, and the province will lose nothing."

On the other hand, age did not weigh him down any more than adversity, and he still retained the energy of his nature. I once heard an anecdote on this subject which was much talked of at the time. Some custom-house officers, on the strength of false information, came suddenly down and searched the house of the parish priest at Mirabeau. They could find nothing, and off they set at full speed. But my grandfather

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income out of his money in the stocks, which they call *damnum emergens;* but this was repugnant alike to his plans and to his principles."—*Private Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

was no sooner apprised of it than he ordered a pursuit, and mounting on horseback, which habit he had already relinquished, he followed their track over fallow grounds and through woods, where they had taken refuge in their fright, and drove them to the banks of the Durance, which these fellows forded in the best manner they could. Fortunately for them the water was low. This did not appease my grandfather: he wrote in the strongest terms, demanding the dismissal of all the leaders, and protesting that if this satisfaction were denied him, all the custom-house officers in the province should be driven into the Rhône or into the sea. It was deemed expedient to treat with so formidable a man, whom the provincial government would not irritate for such a trifle. Some of the officers were really dismissed, and the principal offender came, of his own accord, to crave forgiveness*.

This fiery disposition was apparent in all his dealings, but more especially when he had an opportunity of doing any good. No man was more kind-hearted,

* For this reason, up to his last moments, those wretches held him in such awe that they were always afraid to speak to him of a long list they had against him of duties and extortions. They, therefore, waited for his death to charge his widow with a great variety of claims for plate dues, mortgage dues, estate dues, &c. &c. They brought her in an account of 50,000 francs, which they had feared to present to her during her husband's life. My grandfather appears to have bequeathed to his children all his antipathy to agents of customs or excise.--*Note by Mirabeau.*

more attentive, more noble, more ready to serve, more indefatigable to oblige all who wanted his assistance, and none had reason to fear reproach from him. Nature seemed to have carved him out as the natural protector of his fellow-creatures. Whenever any poor mountaineers, who had law-suits, or people who had been obliged to leave their country from other causes, were sent to him, he took up their defence with an earnestness and vigilance which nothing could exceed. He bore down all opposition, embraced every particular, and confused nothing. His advisers, his agents, his money, his house, and his friends, were at the service of poor people; and, in this respect, his whole life was a series of noble and generous actions that gained him a very high reputation and unlimited gratitude. In fine, all the graces of benevolence adorned his actions, as much as the graces of diction and the fire of eloquence were the soul and support of his mind *.

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* "He lived in retirement, but not in solitude; on the contrary, the very best society paid him marked attention. His admired evening parties may be said to have been nothing less than a school of honour, of historical narrative, of eloquence and dignity. There you were sure to meet a great number of select individuals. His turn of mind was not that which gives most effect to the wit of others, which doubtless is the best, as it is the rarest. He had too much fire and liveliness to do this. He was by nature rather inclined to a noble and keen humour; but as this talent easily becomes severe, a family failing, his principles would not let him give way to it. A grave and lofty manner was the custom and rule at his house; but nothing could equal the energy, the subduing power, the grace-

In 1717, there were great rumours of war, and of mighty preparations. My grandfather was written to, and asked whether he would accept his former rank in the army, which would have made him lieutenant-general, and go to Italy. His health would not allow him to do so; it went on declining to his death, and his sight at last failed him all at once, so much so that he could not walk about without assistance. His countenance had never changed; the majesty of age set off

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fulness, and the majesty of his language. In every thing else, except his eyes, which, without altering in appearance, had become so weak that he could hardly see to walk, he lived on uninjured to the last, his features not having suffered the slightest change. His fine striking head, formerly rather inclined, was sustained by the silver collar which succeeded the ruptured muscles. His dress, which upon any other would have looked vulgar, appeared sumptuous upon him. No man ever showed a more elegant bearing, or affected it less.

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"When near his death, from his various active labours and his wounds, his health had become so impaired that he could not always govern his temper. Yet he perceived that his estimable wife, who had been reared under the mildest of fathers, and the best of men, seemed frightened by these violent bursts, and that so total a change of climate had also affected her blood. Honour, reason, and affection, led him to exert the utmost self-control; but whilst he was thus driven to do violence to his feelings, to the detriment of his own health, the remains of his old habits, and of that raging impetuosity which he had never entirely subdued, still retained much influence over him. Her only course was therefore to anticipate and remove every cause of excitement; and it is true to say, that she thus kept him alive."—*Private Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

the beauty of his commanding stature, and enhanced all his natural advantages, which, whatever be the common opinion, are much more valuable to a man than to a woman, whose destruction, misery, and ruin, are generally the consequences of possessing them.

My grandfather died on the 27th of April 1737, in his seventy-first year, beloved and venerated by his family, revered by his countrymen, esteemed and honoured wherever his name was known. His death was felt throughout his country as a public loss. However, he held no charge, no office; he was invested with no authority, nor had he any other influence than that derived from his personal merit. His most striking qualities were not free from many of those blemishes which excite dread. His vassals feared him; every one about him wore that look of awe which a resolute master imposes*; but all regretted him, and deplored

* We transcribe from the private unpublished memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau, two anecdotes, which show that this terror, produced by an exaggerated opinion of his anger and violence, affected men of very different ages and conditions.

"I was told, in 1737, by Escursau, son of the mason who repaired the castle in 1702, that one day, being then young and nimble, he was in the principal drawing room, and made an impertinent reply to some order his father had given him. My father, coming in at the moment, and having heard it, rushed at him, which so terrified Escursau, that he instantly leaped out of the nearest window, which was a good distance from the ground, and the court yard was paved."

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"The boat of Saint-Paul, an estate lying opposite to ours, with

his loss. What is the cause of this apparent anomaly? Is it that men desire to be ruled, provided they know where to seek security against oppression? Such might be the case with those who lived in his house; but there were others who owed him nothing. But why did it occur with the whole province? I will try to explain the reason.

This man deserved much, and obtained nothing. Worn out with service, covered with wounds, full of honour and enjoying a great reputation, always disinterested, noble, and just, he received neither reward, nor rank, nor place, nor pension. He stood in no man's way. After his death, his memory obtained in homage the reward which should have been given to him during his life. His defects were forgotten; nothing survived

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the Durance running between, has the privilege of plying to a certain distance. The President of Saint-Paul had sent his people to measure and trace those limits, in order to ascertain them. My father, apprised of their doings, sent his servants to throw the men into the river. The servants limited their orders to their hats and stakes. The matter had passed from my father's mind, when, riding one day to Aix, he saw a carriage with six horses draw up, and a man in black alight from it, who, leaving the road, crossed a ravine, and letting my father pass on, made him a most profound bow from the top of a bank. Having afterwards asked who this was, he was told that it was the President of Saint-Paul, a man of high birth and considerable fortune, who had taken flight on hearing of his approach. He jested, on his arrival at Aix, upon the honour they did him in supposing that he had withdrawn from public life to dust the judges' old gowns in his province."—*Private Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

him but his virtues and merit. In this world we must make a choice between ESTEEM and FORTUNE. All men resemble that original race termed Gascons; "we cannot possess at the same time their friendship and their money."

They who might censure the vivid colours we have been bold enough to use in depicting a man who has not found a place either in courtly records, which are called histories of nations, or in the lying columns of newspapers, would, in our judgment, be wrong. We do not tell them that former times at all resembled our own (for though the picture of our manners is always changing, the movements and means never change); that to make people talk about us was then, as at present, a beggarly pretension which, by braving contemporary ridicule, and the contempt of all good men, purchased with gold the vain advantage of celebrity. We will not assert that the different means: the assiduity, the endurance, and the slavery which lead men to fortune, are always repugnant to men of real worth, endowed with an honour which cannot bend to servile compliance and base submission. We will not assert that very often, too, these men, dissuaded by the promptings of wisdom from following the allurements of favour, and purchasing the enjoyment of ostentation at the cost of their time and liberty, which are the sure riches of life, leave honours and dignities to vulgar minds. But we will say that no man can be

endowed with every quality. Men of delicate feelings do not possess those gifts which enable others to elbow their way through the crowd of pretenders surrounding the counters of fortune. Sometimes, indeed, circumstances make it necessary to employ such men, and oblige a government to bring them forward. Then, it must be owned, they produce very different results from those usually expected from the favourites of the blind deity: but, happy the people! happy the times which do not witness such occurrences!

Whatever be the truth, we cannot suppose any one will question the fact, that in all countries and at all times, there live and die, remote from the bustle of public affairs, a number of men very superior to those who play a part on the world's stage, though often the mark of public scorn *. The venerable man, of whom we have been speaking, did not, however, live in obscurity; nor could he pass a single day, or perform a

* This just remark is to be found in Saint-Simon, narrowed, it is true, by his spirit of caste, which was a weakness in that author, but conceived in terms which one might believe had been applied to the Marquis John Anthony, were it not proved that Saint-Simon never knew him.

"Thus we see noblemen of signal merit spend their lives in ordinary occupations, though their lofty genius would sustain with dignity and glory the weight of the greatest affairs both of peace and war, if birth and merit, were not certain causes of exclusion, especially when joined to a proud spirit which disdains to make its way by meanness, and acknowledges nothing but truth."—*Vol. IV. p.* 100, *edit.* 1829.

single action, which partook of mediocrity. But he needed both a wider field and a better historian. We do not undertake to offer him to the veneration of posterity *, but he must enjoy that of his own family; and happy would it be, if its members took him as their model, his actions as their example, and his virtues as their precepts!

* Mirabeau, in fact, never thought of publishing this notice.—*Editor.*

MEMOIRS OF MIRABEAU.

BOOK II.

We have explained the reasons which induced us to place at the commencement of this work the account written by Mirabeau of his ancestors, and principally John Anthony. The same motives induce us now to present to our readers the son of the latter, before we proceed to Mirabeau himself.

John Anthony had several children, four of whom died before him. Three sons survived him: these were Victor, who obtained great celebrity by his works, and was still better known as the father of the immortal Mirabeau; the Bailli of Mirabeau, who also enjoyed a high reputation; and Count Louis Alexander, who has left but few traces of his existence.

As the two first are entitled to a more detailed notice, because they will continually appear before our readers, in consequence of their intimate connection with almost every transaction of Mirabeau's life, we shall begin by briefly sketching the life of the third.

Louis Alexander was born on the 6th of October, 1724, and received Knight of Malta on the 7th of April following. He went through the usual studies and exercises of the young nobles of his time. His character partook of the impetuous singularities which so eminently distinguished his family. Some altercation occurred between him and his elder brother, relative to his share of the family property *. He passed rapidly through the inferior grades, and obtained the rank of captain in the king's regiment †. He was present at the battles of Dettingen, Fontenoy, Lawfeld, Rocoux, at the sieges of Menin, Ypres, Furnes, and at every other that took place during that war. It was after the peace ‡, that his extraordinary adventure with Mademoiselle Navarre took place. This young lady was a kind of kept mistress, who had run away from the harem of Marshal Saxe, and whom Louis Alexander married during the delirium of a blind passion. The whole of this romantic story is to be found in the memoirs which Marmontel wrote in his dotage, and in which he embellishes, with licentious tales, the *moral* lessons destined for his children. Notwithstanding

* Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

† He first served under the orders of the illustrious Vauvenargues, his relative and friend.

‡ The peace of Aix la Chapelle, concluded in 1748, and signed on the 18th and 23rd of October.

the singularity and interest of this event, we confine ourselves here to a brief extract *, because the full

* In the year 1748, Marmontel, at that time twenty-five years of age, became acquainted, at an evening party, with Mademoiselle Navarre, who, being desirous of seeing the young author of a successful tragedy (Dionysius the Tyrant), had him introduced to her by Monet, the manager of the comic opera. Although the passion with which this fascinating courtezan inspired Marmontel was not cruelly treated by the lady, it still took entire possession of his heart. During his stay with her in the country, he was tormented in every possible way by this woman, whose fantastic whims bordered upon madness. During a separation, which was to have been only temporary, she took another lover, the Chevalier Mirabeau, and very coolly came, accompanied by him, to pay a visit to Marmontel, whose account of the visit we here transcribe.

"I was still confined to my bed from the effect of my grief, when one morning I heard some one enter my room.

"'Who is there?' I said. I received no answer; but my curtains were drawn aside, and I felt myself embraced by a female, who, pressing her face upon mine, bedewed it with tears.

"'Who are you?' I again asked, but received no reply, and my visiter continued her caresses with tears and sighs. At length the person rose, and I recognised Mademoiselle Navarre, in a mourning deshabille, and in tears, which rendered her more lovely, more fascinating than ever.

"'Is it you, Mademoiselle?' I exclaimed, 'Alas! what brings you here? Do you wish to cause my death?'

"On uttering these words, I perceived behind her the Chevalier Mirabeau, silent and motionless. I fancied I was dreaming; but Mdlle. Navarre, turning towards him, exclaimed, in a tragic tone—

"'Behold, Sir, the man whom I have sacrificed for your sake,—the most passionate lover, the most tender, faithful friend I ever had in the world. Behold the state to which my love for you has reduced him, and confess how culpable you would be if ever you rendered yourself unworthy of so great a sacrifice!'

particulars of this strange anecdote would far exceed our limits *.

"'Are you well enough to get up?' she asked. On my answering in the affirmative, she continued—

"'Well, then, dress yourself, and let us have breakfast, for we want to ask your advice, and have many important things to communicate to you.'

"I immediately rose, and ordered coffee. As soon as we were alone, she said to me—

"'My dear friend, we are going, the chevalier and I, to purify our love at the foot of the altar. We intend to marry, not in France, where we should experience too many obstacles, but in Holland, where we shall be free. Marshal Saxe is mad with jealousy; here is a letter he has written to me. He speaks slightingly of the chevalier, but the latter will obtain satisfaction for it.'

"I represented to her that a jealous man could scarcely be expected to be just towards his successful rival, and it would not be prudent nor indeed possible to attack the Marshal.

"'What mean you by attacking?' she replied. 'A duel—sword in hand? That is by no means our intention. I have not made myself properly understood. The chevalier, after our marriage, intends entering the service of some foreign power. He is known: he may choose; and with his name, his valour, his talents, and his personal advantages, he cannot fail rapidly to attain the highest rank. He will shortly be seen at the head of armies, and it is in the field of battle that he will meet the marshal.'

"'Excellently well imagined, Mademoiselle,' I replied; 'I approve of your project—it is noble, and worthy of you both.'

"They were indeed as proud and happy as if the plan was to be executed the very next day. I subsequently learnt, that after being married in Holland, they had passed through Avignon; that the chevalier's brother and enemy, the pretended 'Friend of Men,' had found means through his influence to have them pursued even into the papal dominions; that when the officers of justice came, by order of the vice-legate, to arrest them, the lady was in labour, and the

* For note, see next page.

Louis Alexander, whose character was seriously injured by this unfortunate marriage, quitted France immediately on becoming a widower, and entered the German army. He was raised to the dignity of grand chamberlain and privy councillor to the Margrave of

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fright she experienced on seeing the officers enter the house, brought on a disease that caused her death."

We must own, that notwithstanding all the details contained in the family correspondence, we have been unable to find the slightest indication of that abuse of influence of which Marmontel accuses the Marquis of Mirabeau; but we shall, in the course of our account, find plenty of grounds for such an imputation.

* When, in the course of this work, it will be seen how proud the Mirabeau family was of its ancient and pure nobility, the grief and anger which the first marriage of Alexander Louis must have caused his two elder brothers, will easily be conceived. In order not to dwell longer upon this episode, which is foreign to our subject, we shall merely extract from the family correspondence the following passage of a letter from the chevalier (afterwards bailli) of Mirabeau, then governor of Guadeloupe.

" My feelings and patience have just undergone a rude trial. I had scarcely finished the last word of my preceding paragraph, when a man entered, and requested my kind offices, saying that he had been intimately acquainted with one of my brothers. I asked him his name. He replied that he had some right to reckon upon my friendship, as his name was Navarre. My blood rushed from the very soles of my feet to my head. I, however, answered him coldly, and without betraying any emotion, that his name, as he ought to be perfectly well aware, was no recommendation to my friendship; that, however, I was a public man, and he should ever find in me that justice to which he might be entitled, without my recollecting whose brother he was, either in good or evil. I am still quite disconcerted at this visit, especially when I consider that the man is to become a resident in my government."—(*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 24th* 1753.)

Brandebourg-Bareuth, married a young German lady, Juliana Dorothea Silvia, born Countess of Kunsberg, and died prematurely on the 21st of July, 1761, without issue.

Louis Alexander's two elder brothers having exercised, as we have already stated, great influence over the life of Mirabeau, who was the son of Victor, we think it right to give a previous sketch of these two men, whose characters will be further developed in the course of this work.

The immediate predecessor of Louis Alexander was John Anthony, Joseph, Charles, Elzear, since known under the title of the Chevalier, and afterwards the Bailli of Mirabeau. He was born at Perthuis on the 8th of October 1717, and admitted Knight of Malta on the 31st of July 1720.

We shall merely give a very brief sketch of his private life, which he himself wrote in his memoirs, the energetic and unassuming veracity of which reduced to silence, according to evidence which exists in our hands, the hatred of the minister Berryer, whose persecution of the fearless narrator was the more relentless, because he was afraid of having him for a successor.

The Chevalier Mirabeau entered the corps of the galleys, as ensign, on the 15th of March 1730, being then twelve years and a half old. He served on board the galley "La France," during the rough winter of

1731. He was in active service from 1732 to 1737, was promoted to the rank of second lieutenant on the 1st of April, 1738, and was continually employed during the ensuing years. He was wounded in 1744, in the action of the Ciotat; in 1746 he was appointed lieutenant, and in the same year was wounded by a cannon-ball, and taken prisoner by the English. He served from the year 1747 to 1751, when he obtained the rank of captain. In 1752 he was appointed governor of Guadaloupe *, with the promise of having the gover-

* A few brief extracts will show the duties of that office, and the manner in which the Bailli of Mirabeau fulfilled them.

"What an office have I come here to fill! It is a terrible one for a lazy fellow like myself. I have already informed you that I am here jack-of-all-trades: governor, bishop, commandant, half intendant, half and even entirely president of the courts of justice. Honoured, at least outwardly, as a god and a half, the king himself is not greater at Versailles than I am here. I am feared like half a dozen provosts, perhaps hated; for the people here have little love in them. What a devil of an office! If you meet on your road some man of honour, who knows his duties, is anxious to fulfil them, and is desirous of becoming a prince, send him to this part of the world in order to correct him: he will soon be cured of his hankering after authority."

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"I have never desired the possession of immense wealth, and have never done any thing to acquire it, at which I ought to blush. I have simplified my duties, and reduced them to the most limited compass. Now, suppose your head servant's wages were insufficient in comparison to the labour you required of him, would he not give you warning? I think I shall do the same. I have here 12,000 francs of France, which are equal to about 8000 at Paris. With the obligation I am under of keeping up some state, judge

norship of the Windward Islands. In 1755, he returned home on account of ill health, and served during

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how I can manage. I am aware how ridiculous it is for a governor to be continually complaining of poverty. I perfectly well know the means of enriching myself, but God forbid I should ever experience the temptation of resorting to such means! I prefer, and I am convinced you think in that respect as I do, possessing no wealth, and having nothing to reproach myself with. * * * I fully perceive the turpitude of our affairs, and I should blush at being, on such terms, one of fortune's favourites. Public vice does not in anywise diminish the extent of my duties. God is my witness, that I yield as little as I can to human weakness; the poor are sure of finding a protector in me, innocence a supporter, and knavery a determined foe. This language may appear very singular from a younger brother of Provence; but here I am a sovereign. What heavy responsibility is this for a man who appreciates the extent of his duties! But I pray the Almighty to treat me as I treat others!"—*Unpublished Letters from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, March 22nd, April 6th* 1754.

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"Shall I tell you what was said of you yesterday in the Marshal's (de Belle-Isle) drawing-room, by a man who is listened to and believed? The government are extremely satisfied with the chevalier's management, and they fully appreciate his earnest desire to do well. The knaves, by no means few in number, tremble; honest men rejoice, and the poor know that justice will be done them, without any respect of persons. The doors of their governor are open to them, they say, at all hours; and the whole colony knows that not one of his retainers dares to prevent the poorest negro from telling his story to their master. They know that he will not accept of any present, nor possess ill-acquired wealth; that he has neither wife, nor mistress, nor friends; that he is truly a Melchisedec, who neither drinks nor games, nor lives in useless magnificence; in short, that he could fail in rendering justice except by mistake, and an error that comes not from the heart, is every where

the months of April, May, and June 1756, at the siege of Mahon, where he was severely wounded, and fell dangerously ill *. In 1758, 1759, 1760, and 1761,

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readily pardoned."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 27th* 1754.

"The other day I happened again to see our friend; I spoke to him of your want of means; he then mentioned a whole system of trade in which you might legally engage; he said that the Count of Toulouse had gained greatly by it, and that the Penthièvre family continued it to the present day. He added, that Marshal D'Estrées, born poor, and who left no debts at his death, had been enabled to support his lavish expenditure only by means of such trade, which he had carried on every where. I replied, that being officially appointed to superintend that branch of industry, you would be exposed to the attacks of calumny, when your only aim was to do justice; he observed, that we were nothing but simpletons, with our romantic notions and systems, and I remained silent." —*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 26th* 1754.

"Let them talk on," replied the Bailli; "your brother, wherever he has been or may be, cares for nothing but to do his best, and will always keep his conscience free from reproach, as an honest man, a citizen, and a Christian. As for fortune and success, he is quite satisfied to toss up heads or tails for them."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated April 19th* 1755.

* The following is an extract from a letter, which proves that, notwithstanding the severe wounds the Bailli received at the siege of Mahon, he retained all his serenity of mind, which sometimes showed itself in sallies of wit and humour. His brother having written to him respecting a copy of Virgil, to which he attached the usual importance of a great lover of books, the Bailli, whilst confined to his bed, thus answered him—

"With the exception of a few scratches received in travelling post, the Virgil you speak of enjoys good health. He followed me to

he was appointed inspector-general of the coast-guard of the provinces of Saintonge, Picardy, Normandy, and Britany. He was present, and ran the greatest dangers, at the attacks, by the English, on Rochefort, in September 1757; on Saint Malo, in June 1758; and on Saint Cast, in the month of August following. He was at Havre-de-Grace during the bombardment of that town by the English in August 1759. Deprived by the death of Marshal Belle-Isle* of a kind

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Mahon, where he was neither killed nor wounded, and was not attacked with the dysentery."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, July 4th* 1756.

* Charles Louis Augustus Fouquet, Count of Belle-Isle, Marshal of France, Minister of State, &c. &c., born on the 22nd September 1684, died on the 26th January 1761. He was the grandson of Fouquet, the Minister of Finance, and was born at the period of his family's downfall and ruin; but he eventually rose to higher rank than any part of his family had ever enjoyed. His success was the more noble, because he owed it to his own exertions. The merit and destiny of this illustrious individual appear to us stated in a correct and lively manner, in the following extract from a rather unconnected assemblage of detached notes, most of which were written by Mirabeau, in the Donjon of Vincennes, and which the Abbé Soulevie collected into an ill-digested work, published under the title of "Memoirs of the Duke of Aiguillon's administration."

"Marshal Belle-Isle, who was no less extraordinary by the losses which it was his fate to endure (his brother was killed at the battle of Exiles, in 1745, and his only son, the Count of Gisors, fell at the battle of Crevelt, on the 16th of June 1758, at the age of seven and twenty), than by his successes, the diversity of events which marked his career, and the variety of his talents, all of a superior kind, but by no means extraordinary, united in his person every honour to which a subject can aspire. Examine him

and discerning patron, and exposed to the hatred and jealousy of the minister Berryer, the Chevalier Mirabeau retired to Malta *. He accepted of the generalship of the galleys †, and he thus terminated, without

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in his career, examine him when he attained the goal: no one was ever better calculated to succeed in the world, and no one ever met with more powerful obstacles. No one ever had such opportunities of enjoyment, and none ever experienced more bitter troubles. He was one of the men whose elevation was the most brilliant, and excited the greatest jealousy. From the citadel of Pignerol, where Fouquet seemed destined to bury his family, to the Embassy to Frankfort, how many obstacles, how many prejudices, how much resistance was it not necessary to conquer!—(Page 197.)

* During the first year of the Bailli's residence at Malta, he became acquainted with a man, who was then young and unknown, but afterwards acquired a well-earned celebrity.

"My letter will be delivered to you by a young man who returns to France, having come to this colony as a geographical engineer. He has been played the fool with here by the French engineers and officers, under the sanction of a piece of meanness emanating from the officers at Versailles. This poor young man will call on you on his arrival. He has sense and information; his conduct is very correct, and he is unfortunate. These are sufficient claims to a kind interest in his behalf. His name is 'Saint-Pierre,' and he belongs to a good family of Havre."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated Malta, August* 31*st* 1761.

We find no further mention of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre than the few words which follow:—

"I have seen your young protégé, who appears to me a sort of amphibious engineer. I will do what I can for him with Trudaine."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, November* 20*th* 1761.

† This high office was temporary, and lasted only two years; but the holder had the faculty of retaining it two years more, which,

any reward, the career of danger and fatigue which, during thirty-one years, he had pursued in the royal navy.

The Bailli of Mirabeau was a very witty and sensible man, well informed, virtuous, kind, and feeling; but austere, profoundly religious, proud, and of inflexible firmness. His memoirs, from which we have

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however, was seldom exercised, on account of the unavoidable expenses. The bailli, who had no other fortune than his share of his father's inheritance, and a trifling pension, had been enabled to maintain the dignity of the generalship only by borrowing 150,000 francs from the marquis, and his intention was to retire immediately into private life. During his generalship he acquired, as he did everywhere, the esteem and affection of his subordinates. He received a proof of these feelings, which may be considered not only truly affecting, but almost unprecedented.

"I have already abandoned the general's palace, which is in a state of preparation for my successor. The poor men employed in the galleys have paid me a compliment, which has raised in me the liveliest and most agreeable emotion. They told me, and it was the royal pilot, their natural chief, who informed me of the circumstance, that the inhabitants of the borough in which they resided wished to club together to defray the expenses of the generalship, provided I would continue. I declined the offer, as you may well conceive; but their kindness has greatly affected me."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, November 20th 1764.*

We find, in a letter written about the same period, one of the bailli's secrets for making himself beloved by his inferiors.

"If ever it became my duty to put men in their right places, I would consult the voice of the people. I wish the Crosses of Saint Louis were awarded by the soldiers. Let neither injustice nor weakness be shown towards our inferiors, and every man will be the idol of his subordinates. The unjust man will be abhorred, the weak despised." —*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

just extracted, and the numerous fragments of correspondence which we shall present to our readers, show that there is nothing more likely than the anecdote of him mentioned by Mirabeau *, relative to a circumstance which took place on the 15th of October 1755, at the toilette of Madame de Pompadour.

As a naval officer, he evinced great talents; as a military man, he displayed the most brilliant valour;

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* In the "Original Letters written from the Donjon of Vincennes," vol. ii. page 317 of the original edition, Paris, Garnery, 1792, 4 vols. 8vo. (the numerous extracts which we shall give are taken from this edition), is the following:—

"The Abbé, afterwards Cardinal Bernis, wished to bring the Chevalier Mirabeau into the administration. The essential preliminary step was to effect a reconciliation between him and the Marchioness of Pompadour. The chevalier, one of the handsomest and most intellectual men of his day, was introduced at her toilette. For a length of time he carried on a witty and brilliant conversation calling forth all his natural and acquired talents; in a word, he was 'charming,' and from a 'charming man' to a minister of state, you may conceive that, under certain circumstances, the distance is not great. In one of those moments of infatuation which lead your respectable sex to act by fits and starts, Madame de Pompadour said to the chevalier,—

"'What a pity it is that all you Mirabeaus are such hot-brained men!'

"The Chevalier Mirabeau immediately resumed all the roughness of the sailor, and retorted in these remarkable words:—

"'It is true, Madam, that such is the title of legitimacy in our house; but wise and cool brains have been guilty of so many follies, and have ruined so many kingdoms, that it would not be perhaps very imprudent to make a trial of hot brains. At all events, they certainly could not do worse.'"

as governor of Guadaloupe, and afterwards as inspector-general of the ports and sea coasts, he displayed abilities of the first order. But he was deficient in those means which ensure success at court: his mind was in every respect in strict conformity with the imposing severity of his appearance. Versailles, and Paris, and the life of a courtier, inspired him with an aversion half feudal, half republican, which almost amounted to a mania. Sufficiently proud of the antiquity of his race, evincing undisguised contempt for the equivocal upstart nobility of certain ministers, and the pedantic but powerful plebeian clerks; fully sensible of the length and utility of his own services; upright, disinterested, true, and even inclined to censure,—he adopted, in the steps he took, neither the active zeal, the indefatigable assiduity, nor the obsequious patience which ensure success. Being designated by the unanimous and loudly expressed wish of the navy, first, as an assistant to the ministry, and afterwards, as minister, on the retirement of M. de Moras, he did nothing to obtain office, so difficult to come at, nothing to assist his friends, nothing to distance his competitors. He very soon resigned the high but distant employments to which the able tactics of the men in power wished to confine him, and which, fatiguing and unproductive as they were, ruined his health without increasing his fortune.

From this period, he devoted himself entirely to the

interests of his order, and rendered himself so useful, and so entirely gained the confidence of every one, that it was proposed to raise him to the sovereign dignity, which he refused in 1770, on the death of the grand-master Pinto, and in 1773, on the death of the grand-master Ximénes, his intimate friend*. He was appointed, at a very late period of his life, to the commandery of Sainte Eulalie, in Rouergue†, and he devoted the income arising from this office to the repayment of large advances made to him by his brother the Marquis, also to pay the latter a considerable yearly contribution, in order to alleviate the heavy expenses that weighed upon him, and finally, to the forming of a rich library‡ at the family residence. He indulged

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 13th 1765. Another letter from the same to the same, December 3rd 1770.

† On the 15th of June, 1766, in the place of the Bailli of Teucin, who, openly aspiring to the sovereign dignity, and fearing the competition of the Bailli of Mirabeau, had formerly intrigued against him with greater inveteracy, because the grand-master Pinto was ninety years of age.

‡ A voluminous catalogue, in our possession, and in the handwriting of the Bailli, proves that this collection of books was of considerable value. We have heard it related on the spot, that in 1793, when Mirabeau was declared a traitor to the revolution, some neighbours of his, who did not reckon honesty among the virtues they professed, came from Manosque to plunder the castle. Several reached the library, which was a vast gallery on the first floor, receiving the light from a range of windows opening into the interior court, and one of them placed immediately over a well two hundred feet deep, excavated in the solid rock upon which

in acts of benevolence of all kinds, at Mirabeau, Perthuis, Aix, Malta, Sainte Eulalie, indeed at every place where he spent any part of his revered and honoured old age; but he conferred his bounty with care and judgment.

He always remained strongly attached to his brother, whom, in his affection and respect, he almost idolised, although he by no means coincided in his illusions, his whims, and his systems of economy. The Bailli was always the confidant, sometimes the mild opponent, but oftener still the warm apologist of his brother.

Often, upon the statements of the Marquis, he accused with vehemence the weak and persecuted, whom afterwards, when he had made personal inquiries, which led him to follow the impulse of his reason and his heart, he defended with a zeal sometimes timid and patient, sometimes vehement and courageous. In a word, his life was entirely mixed up with that of his brother, and without partaking of the errors of the latter, he partook of his misfortunes. Being able to enjoy in his peaceable retirement what he termed *otium cum dignitate*, his generous self-denial threw

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the castle was built. One of these worthies, neither of whom probably could read (a talent in those days sufficiently rare in that part of the country, and which, we sincerely hope, is not so now), took it into his head to fling into the well some of these new-fashioned projectiles. He succeeded, and this prowess exciting a patriotic emulation, the six thousand volumes composing the library soon found their way to the bottom of the well, where they still remain.

him into tumultuous debates, and lamentable family dissensions. He was, we repeat it, a really superior man, gifted with admirable wisdom and probity; but he was neglected and unknown, and his rare qualities were of no advantage to his fortune, nor his virtues to his happiness.

The eldest of the surviving sons* of the Marquis John Anthony, was Victor† de Riqueti, Marquis of

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* Two brothers had preceded him: John Francis, born in 1709, who died young; and Victor, Knight of Malta, ensign in the regiment of Mirabeau, born in 1710.

"A fatal accident cost my eldest brother his life. He was already an officer in my father's old regiment, and a young man of great promise. He was not only beloved, but adored by every body. He possessed very ardent passions, such as nature has implanted in the blood of our race; but all were of the more amiable sort. His heart was the most affectionate possible, and his mind so noble as to delight all who knew him."—*Unpublished Family Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

The preceding extract, as may be seen, is a completion of the note which we have placed at the bottom of page 169, of the first Book, comprising the life of John Anthony, Marquis of Mirabeau. This second note would be almost a repetition of the first, were we to transcribe it textually. In our extracts we shall avoid as much as possible such redundancies, which frequently escaped the Marquis, especially in those writings which he destined for his family.

† And not Philip, as stated by the elder Gassicourt, in his "Essai sur la Vie privée d'Honoré Gabrielle de Requetti. Paris, Year VIII., page 4 (first edition), and page 2 of the second edition published in 1820." At the end of this second edition there is a note, in which the author complains of having been copied by Publicola Chaussard, who has also placed a "Summary of the Life of Mirabeau" before a compilation entitled "Esprit de Mirabeau."

Mirabeau. He was born at Perthuis, in Provence, on the 5th of October 1715, two brothers having preceded him, who died under age. He was received as a knight of Malta on the 1st of September, 1718. He entered the army at the age of fourteen as ensign, and became captain of grenadiers in the regiment of Duras, of which his father, John Anthony, had been colonel, and who sold out in 1712 to the Marquis of Gensac.

Placed in the army at this early age, Victor distinguished himself at the sieges of Kehl and Philipsburgh, at the attack upon the lines of Dettingen, where he received a wound, and in the battles of Hisperberg and Clausen. He made the campaign of Bavaria in 1742, and was decorated with the Cross of St. Louis in 1743*.

The reproach would appear plausible, because the elder Gassicourt quotes an edition of the "Esprit de Mirabeau," dated 1804 (Paris Fr. Buisson, Year XII), posterior, consequently, to the "Essai sur la Vie privée," which, as we have just said, was published in Year VIII. But unfortunately the complainant was ignorant of the existence of a first edition of the "Esprit de Mirabeau," which appeared in Year V. (Paris, Fr. Buisson, Year V, 1795) and by comparing this with the later work of the elder Grassicourt, the reader is tempted to retort the question, and to charge the accuser. The real plagiarist, whoever he was, only exposed his own deficiencies, for the Essay like the Summary, and the Summary like the Essay, are but poor specimens of biography, and contain a great number of errors, which are strong evidence of a shallow knowledge of the subject, proving that the authors must have written without care, research, or critical attainments.

* It is a singular fact, that the insignia of the Order of St. Louis are not to be found in the many portraits of the Marquis of Mirabeau, three of which have been engraved. The same thing

On the 27th of May 1737, Victor, then only twenty-one years and six months old, became chief of the family, by the death of the Marquis John Anthony, who left only annuities to his widow and his two other sons*. Henceforward Victor cared little about the profession of arms, which he had embraced without any decided vocation, from pure filial submission, and which he intended, as it were, merely to travel through, like all the other of the young nobles, but without remaining a soldier for life.

"I did," says he, "all I could to quit the service, from the time I saw, in 1740, the determination of the cardinal† to refuse me everything, and was informed that it arose from personal animosity. Never-

occurs in the portraits of his brothers, the Bailli and the Count. The Bailli wore only the grand cross of Malta, as the Marquis wore only the medal of the order of Vasa, and neither enumerated in his long list of titles, that of knight of St. Louis. Must it be inferred that these proud nobles attached but little importance to a distinction that could be obtained by plebeians?

* "My father left by his will four thousand livres per annum to my mother for life, and to each of his younger sons fifteen hundred livres a year for life, and ten thousand livres in cash, payable upon their becoming of age. He said in his will, that although he thought he had done them justice, he begged of them, in case it did not so appear to them, to consider the great expense he had incurred for their reception at Malta during their minority, at a time when specie bore a very high premium in France, which rendered the purchase of Spanish pistoles more expensive."—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

† Cardinal Fleury.

theless, M. d' Angervilliers* detained me. I would no longer remain with my regiment, although leave of absence and reliefs† were always readily granted to me. But at last, when the war began, I found myself engaged, in spite of myself. I then thought that I must make another campaign, in order not to retire with a bad grace. At the commencement of the year 1742, I was in Bavaria, having fitted myself out at Strasburg as aide-de-camp to Marshal Broglie; but it was to no purpose, for the Marshal never joined us. On my return to Paris in December 1742, I attempted to negociate an affair (the purchase of a regiment), which ought naturally to have attached me to the army; but the little interest created in the metropolis by the critical state of the military of France, prejudiced me strongly against the profession‡. I therefore adhered to my previous resolution of honourably quitting the profession of my forefathers §."

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* War Secretary under Louis XV. He is mentioned in the life of John Anthony, page 145.

† In the style of military ordinances, these are orders of the King, authorising the drawing by absent officers of the pay which accrues during their absence.

‡ "In consequence of my having left the army in 1742, with leave of absence from the General only, an annoyance was practised upon me which disgusted me entirely. It was pretended that a man like me required leave of absence from the Court."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 18th 1754.*

§ Domestic Memoirs, already quoted.

Having thus taken his resolution, and given up his commission on the 7th of March 1743, Victor resigned the Cross of Malta, and on the 21st of April, in the same year, married Mary Genevieve of Vassan *, more recommendable by the advantages of birth and fortune than by beauty of person. She was born December 3rd, 1725, was married on the 10th December 1737, to John Francis de Ferrières, Marquis of Saulvebeuf, and became a widow the following year, this first marriage never having been consummated.

It was not disgust alone for a military life, and the fear either of remaining without promotion, or of ruining himself to attain it, that led to the premature retirement of the Marquis of Mirabeau from the army: his true motive was, that having made some excellent studies conjointly with his second brother, the Chevalier, afterwards Bailli of Mirabeau, he had early resolved to devote himself exclusively to the labours of the closet.

We have, in fact, evidence, that from 1737, when he was scarcely yet two-and-twenty, he turned his attention to political economy, wrote some large

* And not Louise de Caraman, as is written by some biographers who have copied each other. If they had read attentively the letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, which contain the only true particulars published up to this time concerning the family, they would have seen, in vols. iii. page 77, and iv. pages 138 and 167, that there never were any alliances nor relationship between the Riqueti of Caraman and the Riqueti of Mirabeau; they would also have seen the reason why.—*Editor.*

volumes of private memoirs, and traced out for his posterity, which was not to exist till ten years later *, plans, injunctions, and instructions, curious from the dogmatical spirit which he displayed all his life without ever softening or humanising it, and from the ostensible style which he adopted for the public.

We say ostensible, because his familiar letters, of which we have thousands, and which are all remarkable for their copiousness and ease, and for a freedom both witty and jocular, form, as our readers will presently perceive, the most inexplicable of contrasts with those writings destined for publication. These were composed, as it were, in the public presence, and in them his ideas, always at bottom sound and sensible, are counter-

* Our documents on this head go no further back than 1737, but it appears that the Marquis had commenced two years previously.

"I have always kept a memorandum of every thing, preserved every thing, and given an account of every thing. At twenty I spoke and wrote already to those who will succeed me." —*Unpublished Letter of the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, November 29th* 1779. The marquis so well preserved every thing, that without counting his original works, he left at his death more than four hundred folio volumes of copies. He one day wrote to his brother:—

"If I should happen to die, how surprised would you, my books, my collections, and my affairs be, to find yourselves obliged to live together. I often laugh at the idea."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Bailli, dated October* 18*th* 1783. The preservation of a part of this immense collection has furnished us with the prodigious number of extracts from manuscript contained in, or rather which compose the first part of this work.—*Editor*.

balanced by the peculiar quality of his obscure*, heavy, and whimsical style, consisting of a confusion of tropes and incoherent metaphors, or, to speak more plainly, for we must tell the truth, by his intolerable bombast.

This decided inclination to literary pursuits, caused him to leave his native province, where not only the intellectual nourishment, suitable to his taste, was wanting, but an object for his ambition, an opening for literary fame, which he considered himself sure of obtaining †. He was, nevertheless, induced to return

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* His brother, the Bailli, sometimes hinted this defect to him, but without doing any good. We shall give but two instances.

" Your ' Economiques ' have afforded me pleasure, but I wish that you could, or rather that you would, write in a manner more suitable to the general reader ; for I, that am accustomed to your phraseology, have often been obliged to read over and over again, and sometimes to guess more than I understand."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, March 27th* 1770. " Take notice, therefore, that your style of writing is not clear, even for the well-informed ; and that your figures render your works untranslatable into foreign languages." *Unpublished Letter by the same to the same, December 7th* 1779.

† It appears, however, that the Marquis of Mirabeau hesitated for some time to publish his works.

" As indefatigable in my labours as M. de Belle-Isle in his, I have manuscripts by me which would fill your gallery. I have brought out for the use of the public only that little work on Provincial States, and a certain Analysis which you have read, and which is a tribute to friendship." This analysis was the emphatic commentary upon the poetry of Le Franc of Pompignan, which La Harpe has justly ridiculed. (*Cours de Litterature,* vol. xiii. page 168 of the first edition.) " But I have not been less amused in composing all the rest. I do not wish for literary honours, for

for a short time to Provence for the essential interests of his fortune, by the wish of his venerable mother, who never quitted him *, and by the persevering and reasonable solicitations of his brother. But, independently of the motives derived from his pretensions and his philosophic and literary hopes, a characteristic reason urged him ultimately to desert the province of his ancestors.

"There no longer existed that attachment and respect for ancient families whose power is now unknown †: men no longer prostrated themselves before the old nobles and the grandees of Malta ‡; in short, the province conquered entirely by the inkstand ||, con-

the reason that all honours whatsoever render us actors upon a theatre exposed to the unquenchable malignity of the audience."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 27th* 1756, addressed to the Countess of Rochefort, Maria-Thérésa of Brancas, married a second time, October 14th 1782, to Louis Julius Babon Mancini, Duke of Nivernois, born in 1716, and who died in 1798. His second wife, of whom we now speak, died six-and-twenty days after this marriage.

Let us observe, that the Marquis of Mirabeau did not long maintain this resolution, for it was in the following year that he published his principal work, "The Friend of Men."—*Editor.*

* She died May 26th 1769, at the age of 84. From the commencement of her widowhood, that is to say, during thirty-two years, she resided with her eldest son, who never ceased to pay her the attention dictated by the most lively tenderness and filial piety, carried to a pitch which would not be understood now-a-days.—*Editor.*

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, August 23rd 1770.

‡ Idem.

|| Letter from the same to the same, dated December 29th 1770.

tained more animals armed with pens than twenty-two highly civilised kingdoms ought to possess; for this species is the most venomous and epidemic for a feudal lord *."

In 1740, he purchased the estate of Bignon, in the Gâtinais (six leagues from Sens and Nemours), in order to be in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, although on the other hand "the estates near Paris do not suit the upper ranks, being subject to the laws of plebeians, and liable to constant changes of proprietors *." Two years subsequently he took an hotel at Paris; and thus the man so respectful to the memory of his fathers, who had pertinaciously attached themselves to Provence ever since 1267, not one being willing to fix his establishment elsewhere, quitted that country for ever.

Then commenced the career of labour, to which he sincerely believed he had a special vocation ‡.

This expression, which frequently occurs in the correspondence between the Marquis and the Bailli of Mirabeau, is a burlesque and disdainful allusion to the gentlemen of the long robe, of finance, and of public offices, so hated and despised by the nobles of this stamp. Mirabeau himself made use of this expression upon several occasions, especially in his "Lettres de Cachet," vol. i. page 330.

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli, dated October 23rd 1770.

† Unpublished Domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

‡ "Say, now, am I wrong, since my memory is retentive of objects which my heart and conscience approve, since my vocation is known to me, and my duty marked out, to have promised inwardly to employ my whole life, my humble talents and the introductions

We shall run rapidly through the history of his affairs, his domestic life, and his works.

However liberally portioned as eldest of the family, the Marquis of Mirabeau never had so considerable a fortune as has been stated*; and such as it was, it was

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which rank affords me, although I have not deserved them, in promoting, by all the means in my power, that which I am confident is the useful truth, those simple principles which I know to be capable of working the happiness of my fellow-creatures? It will take, to-day, to-morrow, or never, but I shall have accomplished my task of charity. So long as my constitution permits me to write, so long as age and decency suffer me to appear in places where I can be heard with effect, there shall I be seen and heard. When the sinews of nature inform me of the necessity of retirement, I will then go and practise charity towards my country neighbours. Such is my mission, such are my aërial castles."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau.*

* Mirabeau himself was very ill-informed or very unjust on this head. For instance, it is certain that until 1771, that is to say, during eight-and-twenty years, the Marquis did not enjoy his wife's fortune, nor did he receive the slightest assistance from it in educating and settling their children. After that period, constant law-suits destroyed all the expectations he had formed with regard to this property, which was considerable, it is true, but encumbered and involved in litigation.

A single extract will suffice to explain the error so generally prevalent with regard to the Marquis of Mirabeau's fortune.

"My father's noble manners, his mode of living, of obliging, and in fine of existing, had given people such a high idea of him, that no sooner did I become heir to his fortune, than I was assailed on all sides with questions about it, connected with proposals of marriage and other matters. As I was always very sincere on the subject, and there were occasions even where I was obliged to speak out, I was not believed when I stated things as they were. My

seriously injured by the state of abandonment in which he left his principal estates in Provence, to the ravages of the climate, the Durance, and especially by aids to the commonalties " through the triumphant rule of the inkstand *." Further, these estates were deteriorated by ruinous agricultural experiments, by the unprofitable and expensive undertaking of working mines, by the successive settlement of his children, especially his daughters, for whom he found the best matches in two provinces. One of the causes of the greatest shock his fortune sustained, was the obstinacy with which he pursued his intention of forming two branches in the family. He set about purchasing large estates, at such a distance from each other, that it was found necessary to sell them again. For instance, he bought the Duchy of Roquelaure, in Gascony, the title of which he hoped, perhaps, to obtain. This was a singular and disastrous mania, upon which remonstrances were of no avail; and its effects were such, that the expenses of conveyance and registration amounted to very considerable sums, which the profits of selling again seldom covered †.

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father was considered twice as rich at least."—*Unpublished Domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 16th 1763.

† " Nobody knows better than I do the losses arising from such employment of capital; for no one in my station has done so much in that way as I have. It cannot have cost me less than two hundred thousand francs in the course of my life for expenses of notaries,

His domestic life presents but few events, during a period of fifteen years, in the course of which eleven children were born, from a union hitherto as peaceful as it had been fruitful. In 1757, the death of the Marquis of Vassan, father of the Marchioness of Mirabeau, called her to Limousin, whither she went, unaccompanied by her husband, who was detained in the metropolis, or near it, by his illusions as a writer who wished to become chief of a literary sect. Pecuniary difficulties, imprudent maternal suggestions, pernicious advice, a natural impetuosity, easily excited by the perverseness of those by whom he was beset, quarrels, and respective grievances, produced between the husband and wife seeds of discord, which rapidly sprang up into reciprocal hatred. During this period, Madame de Pailly, already for a long time past preferred to the Marchioness, came to reside at Bignon. Her influence was destined to last for the remainder of the Marquis's life. She was equally dangerous from the power arising from her youth, her beauty, and her artful disposition. The resentment of the Marchioness burst forth. Acts of odious despotism responded to her vehement but just complaints. Her rage knew no bounds: a furious enmity and a scandalous lawsuit were the consequence during fifteen years more; and this lamentable subversion of a bond formed under happy auspices, poisoned

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brokerage, banking, &c."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 20th 1766.*

the remainder of their lives, broke up a highly respected family, and rendered the children, as it were, orphans. They now wanted a mother naturally predisposed to excuse before their father, the ignorance or levity of their youthful years, and to temper for them the severity of their lessons, the bitterness of reproach, and the rigour of paternal chastisement. This event threw the greater number of their children into a career of life attended with unlimited danger, disorder, wanderings, and misfortunes.

With regard to the various works of the Marquis of Mirabeau, the occasion, the subjects, the number, and the importance are well known. Those relating to finance and political economy, always mysterious, little accessible, and therefore little known, excited a curiosity kept alive by the circumstance of their novelty, by the boldness of contemporary writers, and by the warmth and vehemence of the controversies to which they gave rise *. No doubt the theory of the

* This curiosity extended to his person, as he confesses, with feigned humility, in a letter to the Countess of Rochefort, who proposed to conduct him to the French Academy on the day of the Duke of Nivernois' reception.

" Madam, I should not like to miss the opportunity of witnessing, on this day, my master's triumph, and you must therefore be so good as to take me up on your way, or inform me of the mode of introduction; for I am a silly man, and unless I am led to this Tribune, there will be a repetition of what occurred to me on M. de Pompignan's day, when my appearance and figure occasioned all of a sudden so great a bustle in the room, that everybody stood up to

economists was not very consistent, since on the one hand it deduced all political rights from landed property,—a principle essentially feudal, and establishing the despotism of great land-owners; while, on the other hand, it attacked the feudal abuses injurious to agriculture. But this inconsistency was alone sufficient to attach the Marquis of Mirabeau to a doctrine, by which a powerful nobleman reconciled the advantages of feudalism that still remained, to the benefits of a high sounding philanthropy. He also embraced the theories of Dr. Quesnay, became his apostle, and soon aspired to and succeeded in becoming his successor, as chief of the sect. The station of the Marquis in society, his fortune, greater in appearance than in reality, his influence at court*, the sweeping loftiness of his doctrines, even the confused originality of his style, which partook of the Gothic of Montaigne, without possessing his liveliness and grace, and of the raciness of Saint Simon † without his candour, his vigour, or his

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have the satisfaction of inspecting me. Nevertheless, my complexion had not yet been purified by the waters of Vincennes."—*Unpublished letter, dated April 13th 1761, from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort.*

* He numbered among his most intimate friends Marshal Belle-Isle, Ponchartrain, Maurepas, Choiseul, Nivernois, Malesherbes, Bernis, and many others.

† This resemblance could be only the effect of chance, or of some partial similarity in intellectual conformation; for, as is well known, the first and extremely incomplete edition of the Memoirs of Saint Simon was published only in 1788.

precision, procured the Marquis of Mirabeau a great number of adherents and enemies. Among the latter, the farmers general, more excited by a bitter resentment which they did not avow, than by the fears which they feigned, obtained, in 1760, an order, that the marquis should be imprisoned in the Donjon of Vincennes*, on account of his "Theorie de l'Impôt;"

* And not in the Bastille, as has been several times erroneously stated, especially by La Harpe, in his "Cours de Littérature," first edition, vol. 15, page 280; also by the author of the article concerning the Marquis of Mirabeau, in the "Biographie Universelle," vol. 29, page 88, 2nd column; and by the compiler of the notice inserted at page 2007 of "Petite Biographie Universelle," styled classical, and extracted by General Beauvais from the large work, published in 52 volumes, from 1811 to 1828, by Michaud, brothers. The author has anticipated the effect of the present work.

"This picture," he says, "necessarily exposes so many actual, palpable, and terrible truths for our vampires, that it will be a prodigy of civic courage to have dared so much, and of good fortune if it passes off without greater rumour than before. Whatever may arise from it, I run the risk, influenced as I am by a feeling founded upon principles superior to little passing emotions. This last essay was wanting to complete my vocation, and by it I would finish my career."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, October 19th 1760.*

"If they are angry at it, so much the worse for them. For my own part, if I were to become prime minister to-morrow, I would desire that my work took precedence of me; and would pay particular attention to creating similar ones."—*Unpublished letter from the same to the same, November 18th 1760.*

"My curious work has appeared. At all risks, I took some copies to my friends at Versailles, and they immediately presented them at Paris. There is Nivernois (the duke), who has sent me, by special messengers, sermons on twelve points, which I had myself

a fictitious punishment, which was reduced to a detention of five days (from the 19th to the 24th of Decem-

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written and re-written, all so simple and so well-founded on reason, that I have nothing to reply, unless it be that prudence and the state of things are not yet quite in unison. At last I was obliged to promise him, from regard for him and Malesherbes, who is afraid that I should suspend the sale until it is seen how it takes at Versailles, in order not to excite a combination of murmurings between politics and interest. I have therefore promised and executed what nevertheless I felt to be a folly, since in keeping the work back, I admit that which would have remained a question quite long enough to have got rid of the entire first edition, as well as to give it that vogue among the little, which alone has supported me in my other essays against the suspicion of desiring evil."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, December 9th* 1760.

We here state some particulars, with which the Marquis himself has supplied us, upon his state of mind during his imprisonment, and also when he was liberated.

" I have been badly advised, I admit, in pointing out with too much harshness, the evil that exists and the good that might be done. When the animals hunting entreated the lion to divide the game, they did not say to him, ' Friend lion,' but ' My lord lion.' The mane may be of cotton, but the claw is not, and it is the latter which makes the impression."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 22nd* 1760.

" When I undertake to walk upon the stilts of misfortune, I shall be so awkward that you will laugh with that smile of pity which, I trust, I shall never cost you. As a man of rank and fortune, I should be very sorry that the king thought me a bad subject; but I am assured, from good and highly creditable authority, that after having given me a rap on the knuckles, in order to teach me better how to hold my pen, he would do me no further mischief. I ought likewise to grieve for having caused scandal; but when I was a child, and had blackened the eye of my schoolfellow, I used to say that I had not done it on purpose, and then dismiss it from my thoughts.

ber), followed by an exile of some weeks at Bignon (from the 26th of December to the 20th of February).

I am now doing the same, and on that account have confessed everything. But I am a good creature, and shall remain so,—very free, very candid, very friendly, a very good sort of man *, and having no more confidence in my celebrity than in judicial astrology."—*Unpublished letters from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort.*

" Confess that, simpleton as I must sometimes appear to you, I did not select ill my companions of captivity. I took to Vincennes only my Marcus Aurelius, ' The wisdom of Solomon,' and a very curious little book of provincial proverbs,—a rare choice, jovial, and, above all, instructive. The latter I will own was the first I opened after they had locked me in, and my servant was very much surprised to find me laughing alone four minutes after."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated January 6th* 1761.

Let us add that the account in Peuchet's Life of Mirabeau, published at Paris, Bossange, 1824, four volumes 8vo, vol. 1, p. 18, where he relates the proceedings, solicitations, and recantations of the Marquis to recover his liberty, is pure invention. The only thing true in it, is that the Marchioness showed great zeal and tenderness on behalf of her husband.

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* It is assuredly strange to see the Marquis calling himself " a very good sort of man." This is not the only instance, and it cannot be denied that there were traces of " goodness" in this singular and contradictory character. We insert here two passages, from letters in which he adverts to this definition of his character :—

" And I also, Madam, all heavy and stiff as you see me, I preached at three years' old ; at six, I was a prodigy ; at twelve, an object of hope ; at twenty, a fireship ; at thirty, a politician in theory ; at forty, I am no more than a good kind of man. I have felt every change of this periodical growth, and have congratulated myself upon it even to the very last notch."—*Unpublished letter from the*

In the number of his adherents were then and afterwards to be found men illustrious in letters and science, and even crowned heads,—namely, the Margrave of Baden *; Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany; Leopold, (Emperor of Germany in 1790); Stanislaus Augustus, King of Poland; Gustavus III, King of Sweden, who twelve years after sent to the Marquis of Mirabeau the medal of the order of Vasa. It was even stated that the Dauphin, son of Louis XV, was among the number. This prince, termed "the Friend of Men," "the breviary of honest men;" he knew it, they say, by heart, and offered to make the author under tutor to his sons; but the marquis replied, as it is said, "that he would accept of nothing less than the entire responsibility." We adopt this tradition the more readily, as it is confirmed by a passage in one of the Marquis's letters.

"My principles," he wrote, "are, that in public matters determination is necessary. *Aut Cæsar, aut*

Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated December 27th 1756.

"Know that the last who speaks is always in the right with me; that I am constantly told I am too foolish; also, that my servants say, 'Oh, my master is good. My wife also says, 'He is a very good kind of man, and nothing more.' C' est un bon homme, et rien de plus.'"—*Unpublished letter from the same to the same, March 16th* 1757.

* To whom the marquis, twenty-five years after, bequeathed his manuscripts.

nihil. My conditions are, in the event of their being accepted, which is not very likely, for it would not be just to expect that they should appoint coachmen to flog themselves,—my conditions, I say, would be, first, that you should be at your place*; secondly, that I should have the office and title of superintendent, with absolute power over that department, having to treat with the master alone, or supposing he would have another person, with the dauphin; thirdly, that none of the operations should be submitted to the council; and fourthly, that I should have permission to retire the first time I found myself obstructed, without being called upon to give a reason,—reputation being the first of properties, and the only one which, with honour and conscience, cannot be sacrificed to a master; and being too old for fortune henceforward to be able to indemnify me for a compromise of reputation †."

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* That is to say, that he should fill the office of Minister of Marine, to which the Bailli was called by the wish of the navy, and which he would have obtained but for the death of the Marquis of Belle-Isle.—*Editor.*

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated Oct. 23rd 1759.

An analysis of the works of the Marquis of Mirabeau would be a long undertaking, which we shall not, and indeed could not attempt. We shall confine ourselves to giving a catalogue of those which we have, according to bibliographers, but not according to the books themselves, all of which we have not in our possession, and it would be very difficult to get them together.

1746. Some bibliographers attribute to the Marquis of Mirabeau

To sum up the life of a man whose character will be seen but too well in the course of this work, the

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a participation in the "Journey to Languedoc and Provence, performed in 1740, by MM. le F. (Le Franc of Pompignan) the M. of M. (the Marquis of Mirabeau), and the Abbé de M. (Monville). Amsterdam, Chareau, &c. 1746, 12mo. We can affirm that nothing in this frivolous and obscene work, with the exception of a few verses, is worthy of M. le Franc of Pompignan, and that no part of it was written by the Marquis of Mirabeau, who is mentioned in it by name, as well as his two brothers. According to a note to page 191, vol. i. of a modern edition (Paris, Chaumerot, 1805—1808), this narrative was addressed to the Marchioness of Mirabeau, mother of the "Friend of Men." The supposition that such a book was dedicated to the most austere woman of her time, is equally true with the appellation given to the Marchioness, whom the annotator calls the Countess of Caraman, a name that no female of the house of Mirabeau ever bore.

1750. "Mémoire concernant l'Utilité des Etats Provinceaux relativement à l'Autorité Royale." Rome (France) 1750, 12mo.; republished in 1757, and since with notes in the collection entitled "Objets présentée à l'Assemblée des Notables; par de zélés Citoyens; premier objet: *Administrationes Provincialis*. Paris de l'Imprimerie Polytype, 1787," 8vo, 70 pages.

1755. Examen des Poésies Sacrées de le Franc de Pompignan; 1750, in 12mo.

1756. L'Ami des Hommes, ou Traité de la Population. Avignon, Paris; Hérissant; 6 parts, 3 vols. 4to, or 8 vols. 12mo, 1756. This work has been translated into Italian, under the title of L'Amico degli Uomini, ovverro Trattato della Popolazione, tradotto dal Francese (in Sienna), 1783; 3 vols. 12mo.

1757. Précis de l'Organization, ou Mémoire sur les Provinceaux, formant la 4 Partie de l'Ami des Hommes; 4to, 1758.

1759. Réponse du Correspondant à son Banquier, 1759, 8vo, that is to say, to a work by the learned and respectable Forbonnais upon finance.

1760. Théorie de l'Impôt; 1760, 4to, 12mo.

Marquis of Mirabeau was endowed with a mind of great power, rendered fruitful by the best education. He

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1760. Lettres sur les Corvées ; 1760, 4to.

1763. Philosophie rurale, ou Economie générale et politique de l'Agriculture, reduit à l'Ordre immuable des Lois physiques et morales, qui assurent la Prospérité des Empires. Amsterdam, (Paris), 1763, 4to, 1764, 12mo.

1764. Numerous articles in the "Journal de l'Agriculture, du Commerce et des Finances." This journal, which comprises thirty volumes, 12mo, was continued till 1774.

1767. Ephémérides du Citoyen, ou Chronique de l'Esprit national, et Bibliothèque Raisonnée des Sciences, &c. A great number of articles were furnished by the Marquis of Mirabeau to this Journal, which forms nearly 40 vols. 12mo, and was continued up to 1772.

1767. Elémens de la Philosophie Rurale. Lille, 1767, 12mo.

1768. Lettres sur le Commerce des Grains. Amsterdam et Paris ; Desaint, 1768, 12mo.

1768. Précis de l'Ordre Légal. Amsterdam (Paris), 1768, 12mo.

1769. Les Economiques. Paris, Lacombe, 1769, 2 vols. 4to., 4 vols. 12mo.

1770. Leçons Economiques. Amsterdam, 1770, 12mo.

1770. Les Devoirs. Milan, 1770, 8vo.

1774. Instruction Populaire, ou la Science, les Droits, et les Devoirs de l'Homme. Lausanne, Grasset, 1774, 12mo.

1775. Lettres sur la Législation, ou l'Ordre Légal, dépravé, rétabli, et perpétué ; Berne, 1775, 3 vols. 12mo. These letters thus collected had already been successively published in the "Ephémérides."

1776. Supplement à la Théorie de l'Impôt. The Hague. Fr. Gosse. 1776, 12mo.

1785. Entretien d'un jeune Prince avec son Gouverneur. Paris, Moutard, 1785, 4 vols. 12mo.

1788. Education Civile d'un Prince. Dourlac. Muller, 1788, 8vo.

had however become independent at too early an age. The superior advantages of youth, birth, and fortune, and even person, joined to an education but rarely acquired, and the most elevated faculties of the mind, to which we may add flattery, and the habit of domineering without resistance,—all this had brought into play his natural vanity, curbed for some time by his father, in whom some austere virtues, an entire feudal subserviency, and the exercise of a long military command, had exaggerated his sense of authority. The Marquis of Mirabeau accustomed himself early to place upon those under his control the heavy yoke of marital and paternal despotism;—the yoke of the husband, as he had seen it borne by his mother, whom he idolised; the paternal yoke, for never was son more submissive, and even at the age of fifty-four did this haughty man kneel every evening, and bow his head, to receive his mother's blessing. As a nobleman, affable; as a husband, imperious; popular and obliging among his tenantry; formal and haughty with his family; naturally gay, and yet almost always in his family circle wearing a covering of stern and gloomy

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1789. Hommes à célébrer pour avoir, en ces derniers Ages, mérité de leur Siècles et de l'Humanité, rélativement à l'Education Politique et Economique. Posthumous work of the Marquis of Mirabeau (edited by Father P. Boscowich). Bassano, 1789, 2 vols. 8vo.

1789. Rêve d'un Goutteux; a pamphlet relative to the labours of the next meeting of the National Assembly.

moroseness; possessing sensibility, and yet striving at all times to disguise the feelings of his heart; sincerely religious *, but without humility, without indulgence, and never forgiving; disdaining persuasion, and irritated by resistance; sincerely a philanthropist in speculative theory, but hard-hearted and inflexible in the practice of domestic discipline; an ardent apostle of legality, and governing his family with *lettres de Cachet;* economical, and even penurious, with regard to himself, and others; and adopting all possible order in dissipating his fortune in adventurous undertakings; wise, yet committing errors without number; clever, yet deceiving himself in all his measures;—he suffered much, and made others suffer likewise; he had little of serenity, less of joy, and he precipitated his nearest of kin into countless misfortunes, and what is worse, into faults which have been represented as crimes.

Let us dwell a little longer on this strange character, which it behoves us well to describe beforehand, for the purpose of enabling the reader to appreciate the strange events that follow. For, notwithstanding what

* It is erroneously that the piety of the Marquis of Mirabeau has been denied by several writers, particularly by Grimm, vol. ii. p. 171; Paris, Furne, 1829; vol. xvi. page 91; Paris, Fournier jeune, 1829. We affirm, from a thousand proofs, that there was as much sincerity as fervour in the religious opinions and feelings of the Marquis.

has been said by former writers, these will surprise, in a prodigious degree, even such readers as think themselves the best acquainted with the domestic sufferings of Mirabeau, and the obduracy of his father.

It has been said that the Marquis of Mirabeau hated his son; that foreseeing the future superiority of the latter, he was jealous of him, and wished therefore to strangle him. Let us add, that Mirabeau himself thought so, as is evident from the following words in an unpublished autograph letter now before us. "All my misfortunes derive their origin from having offended my father, to whom, ten years since, with the ingenuousness and imprudence of youth, I uttered these touching and too keenly felt words, which, to my misfortune, he will never forget: 'Alas! sir, if you had only self-love, would not my success still belong to you *?'"

We loudly deny these suppositions; and we feel assured that the reader of these volumes will believe us, inasmuch as our testimony must receive great authority from the incontestible truth of the hitherto unknown documents upon which we have founded our work.

The Marquis of Mirabeau experienced neither

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madlle. Danvers, dated, from the Donjon of Vincennes, Nov. 2nd 1780.

These words are repeated by Mirabeau, in a letter addressed on the 17th March 1778, to M. Lenoir. See original letters written from the Donjon of Vincennes. Vol. ii. p. 68.

hatred nor jealousy against his son: nevertheless, he has persecuted him from childhood to manhood with all the rancour of a mortal enemy.

Very few men were so enlightened and yet bore themselves with so haughty a spirit as the Marquis of Mirabeau. His son knew it, acknowledged it, declared it all his life, and placed himself, improperly, no doubt, above his father. Evidence of this fact is contained in the letter from which we have just extracted, and which, dated from the Donjon of Vincennes, is addressed to a very obscure young person, quite unknown to the family, entirely incapable of serving Mirabeau, and to whom he could speak only the language of conviction, and not of calculation.

" My father is as much my superior in genius as he is in age, and by being my parent *."

Mirabeau, as we were saying, has repeated a hundred times the same thing to all his confidants, who have stated it to us. He even wrote it after the death of the Marquis of Mirabeau. The latter, however, it will readily be believed, did not appreciate himself less. In all his life, of which his letters, and we possess thousands †, furnish us, as it were, with

* Letter already mentioned, addressed, Nov. 2nd, 1780, to Madlle. Danvers. Fac-similes of these sentences are among the number affixed to this work.

† We might make up more than thirty volumes, 8vo, from this correspondence, by reducing it simply to moral, historical, political,

a daily and complete detail, he is never found to confess a mistake; not only because he is self-opiniated, but, especially because, in other respects honourable, he could not conceive the possibility of being mistaken. It never happened that the advice of another, a demonstration, a result obtained, or any event whatever, could shake his confidence in himself. It never happened to him to discover in his own errors, prejudices, false measures, erroneous calculations, or in the precipitation or excess of passion, any thing whatever to explain the cause of his continual mis-reckonings; and when his mind, profoundly religious, did not attribute them to the will of providence, his infatuation in himself charged them to the folly or injustice of men, or the caprice of fate. The slightest hesitation, the least doubt of himself could never reach his mind; his impressions, his opinions, his convictions, his duties, such as he conceived them, his conscience, which he *exaggerates* and *displaces* *, have, in his eyes, an authority to which every thing must yield. He shows

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and literary generalities; and yet so interesting would it be, that such a publication could not fail to obtain great success, at a time when literature has found more attention and favour than it will ever acquire hereafter.

* These are characteristic terms which he himself employed in a moment of relaxation.

"I have almost always exaggerated and misplaced my conscience."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, Dec. 20th* 1782.

himself, let us say the word, under the rule of fanaticism, and the blindest of all fanaticism, the fanaticism of infallibility. He is a slave, and would be a Brutus*.

None, after a perusal of this work, even long before they have completed it, will doubt the correctness of this description of him. No one will attribute to unnatural hatred, a system of treatment which is explained by an incurable perverseness of mind. Nobody will henceforth suppose the Marquis to have been influenced by jealousy, which no man in the world could have inspired in one so conscious of his own superiority over every body else.

Gabriel Honoré, since so celebrated under the name of the Count of Mirabeau, was the fifth child of the Marquis, and was born the 9th of March 1749, at Bignon †. The period of gestation was alarming, and

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* Notwithstanding the sincere and profound respect which Mirabeau, even in his most fatal wanderings, preserved towards his father, it cannot be doubted that he had himself discovered this peculiar and marked feature in his parent's character, however doubtful its form. The passage we are about to transcribe will afford proof of this.

"What a man would they make of my father, if it is pretended that self-love or perseverance could dry up his entrails, and that he would rather sacrifice my life than acknowledge his error or my repentance."—(Page 54 des Observations sur un Libelle deffamatoire intitulé Mémoire à consulter et consultation pour la Comtesse de Mirabeau. Aix, J. David, 202 pages, small 4to.

† And not at the Castle of Mirabeau, as has been stated by several authors, especially M. Barthe, page 1 of the notice that precedes one of the last editions of the "Œuvres oratoires." Paris,

during the delivery, the unnatural size of the child's head placed the mother in extreme danger *. The Marquis often afterwards repeated, that before he was even acquainted with the sex of the child, the first words addressed to him were—"Do not be alarmed †!" Destined to be the most turbulent and the most active of youths, as well as the most eloquent of men, and the greatest orator of his day, Gabriel was born with one foot twisted and his tongue chained by the cord (frœnum) ‡, in addition to which his size and strength were extraordinary, and already were two teeth (molares) formed in his jaw §.

"You know now that I have a son who owes his existence to you ||. This has given me an opportunity

Kleffer, 1820. Publicola Chaussard has committed the same error in the summary claimed by Cadet Gassicourt, which precedes the collection entitled "Esprit de Mirabeau;" Paris, Buisson, Year V. (1797). There is a second edition, dated Year XII. (1804). Chaussard is mistaken also in supposing Mirabeau to have been born in 1750.

* Unpublished Letters from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, Le Franc de Pompignan, the Duke of Nivernois, Count Maurepas, dated March 11th, 13th, and 17th, 1749.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated March 11th, 1749.

‡ Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis du Saillant, of the 18th Oct. 1767.

§ Original Letters, written from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. III, page 3.

|| Allusion to a very strange fact between men of grave and enlightened minds, such as the Marquis of Mirabeau and the Duke

of knowing, that to do good, or at least to seem to do so, attracts a kindly regard. I am pretty charitable in word and deed, and I employ all the poor who offer themselves. My wife is so likewise; she dresses with constitutional heroism the most hideous ulcers, has various recipes, and gives five sous to each of those whose sores she has dressed. These trifles succeed: and being stopped by a sort of superstition, as there was a village festival on the birth of my first child *, I intended to have forbidden all village rejoicings. But the country people from the neighbouring parishes were assembled, and testified a joy which I did not expect from them, saying, that if he resembled his father, they should not, for a long time to come, eat acorns, as their neighbours of Egreville had done the year before †."

For a considerable period from the date of this letter we find but one sentence concerning the new-born infant.

"I have nothing to say about my enormous son,

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of Nivernois. The latter had seriously pointed out to the other a particular process by the aid of which a father might ensure the birth of a male child. The Marquis in his turn also hinted it very seriously in a letter dated July 4th 1766, to his son-in-law, the Marquis du Saillant, who afterwards had not less than eighteen daughters and but one son.

* The first child was Victor Charles Francis, born March 16th 1744, and died in infancy.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated April 25th 1749.

only that he beats his nurse, who does not fail to return it, and they try which shall strike the hardest. They are good heads together *."

Gabriel, when three years old, had the confluent small-pox, of a very malignant type. He was for several days in danger. His mother had more tenderness than prudence, and in impatient solicitude blamed the timid management of the physician. She had a great number of recipes, as we have before stated, and she thought proper to try upon the tumified

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, February 10th 1750. In a letter dated July 24th 1763, from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, we find some rather interesting particulars relative to the nurse:

"The hale and robust farrier's wife, of whom you speak, is the same that nursed my son. She is a mistress woman, who has well brought up two coveys of children. She kept a forge, though a widow; for having had two husbands, and finding that they did not last, she refused to take a third. She has paid her husbands' debts, and brought up her sons, who have married in obedience to her wishes. She has reared flocks of geese that would do the Prussian exercise, and turkeys capable of passing a decree upon inoculation †, all the while striking upon the anvil as a pastime, under the impression, as she says, that it lengthens the arms. This is much better than winnowing oats, as Dulcinea did at the audience she gave the ambassador Sancho."

† Just and pointed allusion to the decree rendered six weeks before, June 8th 1763, and by which the Parliament of Paris ordered that the faculties of THEOLOGY and Medicine of that city should report their opinion upon the practice of inoculation for small-pox, and the advantages or disadvantages which might result therefrom.

face some hazardous fomentations, and the application of an eye-salve, which was the cause that the boy's face remained deeply furrowed and scarred *. The Marquis wrote some time after to the Bailli—

" Your nephew is as ugly as the nephew of Satan †."

Let us here remark, that the Marquis returns so often to the subject of this ugliness, more apparent at an age when the expression of the countenance does not compensate for the deformity of the features, that we should be tempted to suspect in him a sort of involuntary aversion, which sometimes takes wise and tender parents by surprise, and is not always overcome by the suggestions of reason, justice, and nature. If such prejudice was really conceived by the Marquis of Mirabeau, it might have been, if not excused, at least explained by this peculiar circumstance, that all his other children and their children were, without exception, gifted with very remarkable beauty, as were likewise himself, his brother, their father and mother, and also their ancestors, whose portraits we possess.

Be this as it may, the accident which disfigured Gabriel, served as a lesson to the father. He had all his other children inoculated, as appears from the following sentence in a letter which he wrote ten years

* Unpublished domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

† Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated Oct. 9th 1754.

after, in reference to the son of one of his friends, the President Rougeaut, who was carried off by the small-pox.

" When, after the loss of my first-born, I had my children inoculated, I who firmly believed that I did not, among my paternal rights, possess such power ;— when my mother, my worthy mother, pious for nearly sixteen lustres, positive, immoveable, an enemy to all innovation, and never having yielded, during that period, but under the rod of resignation, has given her consent, and pressed the execution of it, why does he neglect the pressing duty of securing his own safety by inoculation * ?"

The extraordinary faculties of Gabriel were displayed in the quickness of his understanding, and the retentiveness of his memory. Both were carefully cultivated by a man of merit, Poisson, of whom the Marquis speaks in these terms—

" Poisson is the soul and spring of all that I am worth, or that my family can be worth in future. He is a superior man, who loves me like a spaniel, and whom therefore I love as I ought †."

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated August 25th 1762.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated September 27th 1757. This very honourable and distinguished man was long employed in the settlement of the Marquis of Mirabeau's affairs, particularly in exploring the

He bestowed the greatest care upon his pupil, who rewarded his attentions more by his understanding than by his application. However, from his fourth year, Gabriel was at least curious, inquisitive, and fond of reading. He possessed himself of all papers that came in his way, and it would be difficult to state how far his curiosity led him in search of them *.

This child, at that time the only male descendant of a family greatly infatuated with its name, occupied a great deal of the attention of the Bailli, then only Chevalier Mirabeau, resident at Guadaloup, of which he was governor. He contsantly mentioned the boy in his letters, in a tone half serious, half jesting. He used to complain of his brother's silence.

"You say nothing of your son," he wrote. "For whom then would you have me interest myself, I who have not, nor can have, nor will have children? Would you attempt, by your silence concerning my nephew, to reduce me to the necessity of presenting you with one?

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mines of Glanges in Limousin. More than thirty years after, Mirabeau with great zeal seized an opportunity of being useful to his instructor, by procuring him the appointment of Director of the Hospital at Bayeux. (Unpublished letters from Mirabeau to Vitry. Paris, 1806. Lenormand, page 11.) Our readers are, perhaps, aware, that the son of this same Poisson has acquired in our days under the name of De la Chabeaussiere, an annuity renown in the literature of Athensea and Almanacks.

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated April 2d 1754.

Indeed I should not be far wrong; for my health, which is not good, would be better, were I less virtuous. It is a strange circumstance, but I am attacked in the same manner that Louis the younger used formerly to be. I hope it will not be a troublesome affair, as here in the Tropics we do not possess the ice-ponds of Saint Bernard. However, I shall become the first martyr to chastity of my family, of my profession, perhaps even of my order. This primitiveness will not, nevertheless, please me much. God has not given me so fine a voice as to tempt me to resemble Narses, if it be necessary that I should perform upon the seas the exploits which he accomplished upon land. Bagoas, Origen, and he, were three great men whom I have no ambition to imitate *."

Notwithstanding the importunities of the Bailli, the answers he obtained did not always satisfy his curiosity; and during a year in which there are more than three hundred pages of correspondence, we find but this one passage:

"Your nephew is fat and strong; he is not forgotten, and his education is excellent, for that is the only thing to prevent the smoke of the heart from being drifted in a wrong direction. All Paris talks of his precocity; nevertheless, as he is your child as well as mine, I

* Unpublished letter from the Chevalier Mirabeau to the Marquis, dated January 20th 1754.

must tell you that his acquirements are not very extensive at present. He has little vice, except mechanical inequality, if it were permitted to break forth. He has not much sensitiveness, and is as porous as a bed of sand; but he is only five years old *." A few days after, the Marquis again talks of his son.

" The Marmot has all at once become quite mischievous, quite inquisitive, and quite troublesome. He gives us occupation, but we carefully watch him, and he is in excellent hands †."

We pass over some rather puerile details, and shall extract only a single sentence to prove that happy prognostics were formed from the solicitude lavished upon the child.

" Thank M. Poisson very much, for the education which he bestows upon our Marmot; may he make him an honest man, and a courageous citizen. This is all that is necessary. With these qualities he will make that race of pigmies tremble before him, who play the great men at court. I repeat, with sincerity, the prayer which Joad made on behalf of Eliacin—May God hear my prayer ‡!"

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirbeau to the Chevalier, dated May 13th 1754.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated May 24th 1754.

‡ Unpublished letter from Chevalier to the Marquis, dated August 11th 1754.

Gabriel was, like all children, an indefatigable scribbler; but the following effort surpasses common example:

"I have mentioned a copy of our little boy. This is it:—Poisson, for the first time, the other day, desired him to write before us whatever came into his head, and, with a view of giving himself a lesson, he wrote what I here transcribe for you, which I shall have framed, in order that he may remember that before the age of five years, he knew nothing but what was good. This is the specimen, literally.

"'Sir, I beg you will pay attention to your writing, and not make a blot upon it. Be attentive to what is done, obey your father, your master, your mother, and vex no one. No subterfuge; honour above all things. Attack no one, unless you are attacked. Defend your country. Behave not ill to the servants, and be not familiar with them. Conceal the faults of your neighbour, because the same faults may occur to yourself *."

On the 23d September, 1756, Mirabeau, then seven years old, was confirmed at Bignon by a cardinal †.

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 9th 1754.

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 26th 1756. The cardinal's name is not given in the letter. We supposed that it might have been Cardinal Choiseul. (Anthony Clériadus of Choiseul-Beaupré), a friend of the family; but that prelate, then Archbishop of Besançon,

It was at the grand supper which succeeded this ceremony, that he made the singular distinction related by himself.

" They explained to me that God could not make contradictions; for instance, a stick that had but one end. I enquired whether a miracle was not a stick which had but one end. My grandmother never forgave me *."

If we may judge by the following extract from the correspondence of the two brothers, other sallies may have wounded the sensitiveness of the austere and venerable grandmother, whose mind, otherwise religious, yielded at times to innocent pleasantry. It appears that, from forgetfulness, crawfish were not served at supper, although that crustaceous creature abounded in the watery soil of Bignon. On this subject the Marquis wrote to his brother—

" I find that the crawfish were wanting at the reception of His Eminence. The resemblance of the covering ought to have encouraged their appearance. There is not, in a certain sense, any difference between the two things, only that the antecedent of the one is the consequence of the other. This smart jest, and to the taste of Martin Luther, will appear to you of doubtful

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did not receive his hat until 1761. Bernis, another friend, much more intimate, was not promoted for several years after.

* Same letter.—Original letters, written from the Donjon of Vincennes, Vol. III, page 130.

expression, because you have not a turn for trite sayings. In order to aid you, this is what I wished to say: that the one comes out of the cauldron and the other seeks to enter it *."

Mirabeau's childhood was difficult of control. Occasions for reward from his father and tutor, both not very indulgent, were rare, and chastisement was almost continual.

" The Count does not travel out of his course of penance; in truth, he has plenty of it, and deservedly so. I am an additional instrument for Poisson, because, when he has promised remission, I enable him to break the promise without breaking his word; and I am strict †.

" To-day a sort of festival is given to my mother (the Dowager Marchioness and widow of John Anthony, then seventy-two years of age). This is the business of my son's tutor, an inestimable author and actor in such follies. You will see a part performed by a little monster called my son, who, were he the offspring of the ancient La Thorillière, would not be a more naturally bedevilled, memorable, and buffoon comedian? In fine, Madam, nobody of your rank will be there, except the mother of the young savage who has found favour in your eyes. That which worldly people would term favour, your

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 3d 1756.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 10th 1756.

heart would make appear as addressed by the rising generation to one who has passed seventy-two times three hundred and sixty-five days in the practice of every species of virtue. Allow yourself to be tempted, Madam—it will be a hidden sin. '*Nil desperandum Teucro duce et auspice Teucro.*' The Duke of Nivernois will explain this Latin to you *."

Mirabeau's education became more and more troublesome. Poisson being extremely ill, the Marquis was forced, not without regret, to leave Paris, where he was elaborating his treatises and presiding at his committees of economists; and where, in addition, he warmly served his brother, the Bailli, with the Marquis of Belle-Isle and the Abbé, shortly afterwards Cardinal de Begnis. He could not dispense with going to Bignon, in order to pay attention to his private affairs, now necessarily neglected by the invalid, who, to the office of tutor to his patron's sons, added that of land steward. A number of letters attest the anxiety and discouragement which this long and really dangerous illness, and the slow return of the patient to convalescence, produced in the Marquis, who, nevertheless, does not fail to complain of his unruly child, and concludes one of his letters thus:—

"Poisson will die (he recovered), and I shall go

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated June 17th 1757.

forward, dragging my son about my waist, without knowing into which river I shall plunge him *."

"My son, whose body grows, whose talkativeness increases, and whose countenance becomes wonderfully ugly, is also as ugly in his inquiries and predilections, and a troublesome talker to boot. His mother was yesterday making some anti-declaration to him with regard to his future wife; he replied, that he hoped she would not form her estimate of him by his face. His mother said ingenuously—'Where, also, should I look?' He retorted 'What is below will aid the upper part;' and we all laughed most heartily, without calculating that there is sufficient to excite reflection in this sally of a babe †."

Mirabeau, at ten years of age, experienced a long and dangerous illness.

"My eldest son is still labouring under the consequences of his fever, which has kept hold of him for these two months past, at different intervals. The most grievous symptom is, that he is as rational as if he were thirty years old, and that Poisson is highly satisfied—a thing most uncommon and suspicious ‡."

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* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated October 5th 1757.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated September 21st 1758.

‡ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 23d 1759.

" My embarrassments have recommenced: my son has had a fresh attack of fever, accompanied with malignant symptoms. It would have been necessary to beget another, and where the devil should I find such another sprig of mischief * ?"

We read elsewhere—

" This child, though turbulent, is mild and easily controlled, but of a temper tending to indolence. As he does not ill resemble Punch, being all belly and posterior, he appears to me very well qualified for the manœuvres of the tortoise: he presents his shell, and allows you to strike †."

" This great glutton, Gabriel, goes everywhere begging alms for the poor, following in that respect the example of my mother, in spite of everything I can say to them to prove that there is nothing more out of place, and more positively in opposition to my principles, than manual charities, which make people poor instead of relieving them; which excite and unshame misery; which are consumed without reproducing; finally, which turn aside money from fruitful employment, and where it would triple itself, in order to throw it into the mud ‡."

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* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated September 21st 1758.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Le Franc of Pompignan, dated October 6th 1759.

‡ Letter from the same to the same, dated November 5th 1759.

We here give a reply made by Gabriel to his mother, who reproached him with talking too much, and seeking to be thought clever.

"Mamma!" said he; "I think the mind is like the hand; be it handsome or ugly, it is made for use, and not for show *."

We find an anecdote, at a somewhat later period, which does honour to Mirabeau's character, and he was then scarcely eleven years old.

"The other day, at the prizes which, on my estate, I bestow upon the best runner, he gained a hat; and turning towards an old man who wore a cap, and putting upon the old man's head his own hat, which was still very good,

"'Here,' said he, 'take this; I have not two heads.' This youth appeared to me then to be Emperor of the world. Something divine immediately beamed from his countenance, and attitude. I raved about it, I shed tears, and the lesson was not lost upon me †."

It would be easy for us to give a detailed and daily account of Mirabeau's childhood and education. Our only difficulty would be in making selections from the voluminous correspondence in our possession, especially from the letters which passed several times a week

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 6th 1760.

† Unpublished letter from the Duke of Nivernois to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated from St. Maur, September 11th 1760.

between the Marquis and his brother, and between the former and Le Franc of Pompignan, who was bound to him by the closest ties of friendship, and, if the term may be allowed, by a conformity of dogmatical and pedantic habits. But such details, which would be wanting both in interest and in usefulness, would take us far beyond the limits of our plan, or rather it would occupy the place of numerous other facts more worthy of the reader's attention. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to a few remarks upon the fantastic inconsistencies into which the Marquis was thrown by a continual struggle between his reason and his prejudices, between his character and his heart, between opinion conceived and opinion inculcated; and we shall find him refusing to a child the indulgence usually granted to a young man, judging in haste, and chastising when he should have given instruction.

Here, in the first place, is Gabriel, who "with great talent and intellect, but with still greater natural defects, has not, perhaps, at bottom, either the complete vices that people attribute to him, or the virtues which I would fain substitute *."

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* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 7th 1761. The expression "that people attribute to him" is very remarkable. At that period Mirabeau was only twelve years of age. It is certainly as extraordinary at that age to have enemies as to be already infected with "vices" and with "complete vices." But these vices were not so real as the aversion

Soon after, we find: "This child promises to become a very fine subject *." Then, "He is only just born, and the extravasation is already developed. He has a spirit of contradiction, fantastic, fiery, unaccommodating, and inclining to evil before he is acquainted with it or is capable of its commission †."

Here we have "an elevated mind under the frock of a babe. This shows a strange instinct of pride, noble, nevertheless; it is an embryo of a bloated bully who will eat every man alive before he is twelve years old ‡."

There we read, "He is a type deeply stamped in meanness, and absolute baseness, and of that rough and dirty quality of the caterpillar, which cannot be rubbed off §." Again: "He possesses intelligence, a memory, and a capacity which strikes, amazes, and terrifies §."

Again: "He is a nothing set off with trifles, which will excite the admiration of silly gossips, but will

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prematurely excited by this ill-fated boy. We shall soon produce evidence on this head. *Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 5th* 1761.

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Le Franc of Pompignan, dated November 15th 1761.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated November 29th 1761.

‡ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 3d 1761.

§ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 16th 1762.

never be but the fourth-part of a man, if, perchance, he becomes any thing *."

Elsewhere, the Marquis writes, "I see that the continuation of your kindness towards your nephew has reference to the talents and capacity in which you know he is not deficient; but I know, by virtue of the physical cut of such characters, that you must give it up, whether you will or not. They are always known by their brutal appetites, which emanate from themselves. Indulgence in such appetites leads to excess, which is gross intemperance; and, as self-love, which abandons no one, even upon the wheel, becomes cowardly with cowards, vain with the vain, ferocious with the ferocious, their ambition is to surpass swine. There are dregs in every race †."

Let us remark here one strange peculiarity. If the Marquis is judged by the bitter, we may even say atrocious, style of the last paragraph, the harshness of which we have accused him in our sketch of his character will be readily admitted. But it may be inquired, what authority we have for our assertions, made at the same time, concerning his gaiety of temper, sensibility of heart, and the paternal affection, which he lavished upon a part of his family, even upon strangers, while

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated February 10th 1762.

† Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 18th 1762.

he refused it to several of his nearest of kin. This question will be answered by the extracts which we have selected almost by chance, during a period nearly contemporaneous and very limited, from the correspondence we possess. We have here exercised no other care than as regards our own space. We might extend our extracts indefinitely; but the interest which these materials raise in ourselves, remind us that we ought not to make an indiscreet use of them. Whatever judgment may be formed of them, it will be admitted, we trust, that, independently of the advantage of enlivening and varying our narrative, these extracts were necessary to the particular object stated in this digression, and to justify what we have said concerning the prodigious difference between the *familiar* and the *official* style of the Marquis of Mirabeau; a difference with which those who have read any of his numerous and stilted works will necessarily be much struck.

"You ask me, Madam, whether I am well in my solitude. Judge for yourself. We compose, in all, a little ark of thirty-eight individuals, without mentioning four children at school, one of whom alone * is sixteen ells high—for so much do they demand to make a dress for my daughter. Instead of buying such things, I have interest, to a great amount, to pay for estates

* Mary Anne Jane, born 10th July 1745. She became a nun in the convent of the ladies of St. Dominique at Montargea.

which I took upon myself to purchase, before I had asked the king when it would please him to grant us the property, and take the usufruct. It has at last so pleased him, and he has not inquired of me whether I approve of the property and the price. In addition to this, my shoe pinches in certain places which I do not mention. I have also certain wens behind my ears, always with deference to the criticism of a punctilious geographer, who might place them elsewhere. Well!—with all this I live from day to day as I can; and, when I have no other subject, I laugh again at the grimace which I made a quarter of an hour before in a fit of despair, being always, nevertheless, more and more persuaded of the truth of my great moral principle, that, in order to work ourselves up to a proper state of happiness here, we must incessantly cultivate our sensibility, and root out self-love.

"With my elegances and urbanities, at which you are in the habit of laughing, I have always brown bread, sometimes soft, sometimes hard,—wine a little muddy, some cow-beef in the pot, an entrée of necks and claws of geese, a salad of water cress for the roast, some boiled cauliflowers for entremêts; a few wrinkled grapes, green and rotten, and some rancid nuts for dessert, and always contradiction at table, which teaches me to swallow Provençal impatience. I further possess a little green fire-wood, a candle that serves to write by, and waves most complaisantly to my window curtain,

which makes the sign, and sets the example. With all this, I have a temper ever ready to overflow; a heart (you know that my *tendo Achillis* is in the heart) a heart, I say, which feels grief, hastens it, divines it, anticipates it; senses, (God be praised!) open to temptation; an intellect in which no one will believe, for my words possess but their primitive virtue bestowed by Providence—'bray with modulation *."

" Really, Madam, I pity those who feel compassion at my residence in the country†; that is to say, let us distinguish, if you please, among those who pity me. Are they my friends, and is it on account of my separation from them? In that case, they are right; and this becomes serious, for their presence and their conversation are my only safeguards against a state of frenzied activity, ardour, and impatience, which has devoured me during my whole life. And if God had not given me the heart I possess, I should either end in the madhouse, or make too much noise in the world. Thus, they who would fain console me for my present privations would be ill received; and they who would offer nightingales, cockchafers, and tulips, as a compensation for the loss of my friends, might as well propose, to a

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated November 13th 1759.

† Our readers will recollect that the Marquis of Mirabeau, after his temporary detention at the donjon of Vincennes, remained in exile, six weeks, on his estate at Bignon.

starving man, a nosegay or a perfuming pan, instead of a good dinner, or a pair of satin stays to one of the king of Prussia's grenadiers. I therefore, tell you Madam, that being bound only to and by my friends, and having had the happiness and the good sense to attach myself to those I have found most deserving, and to merit their friendship, instead of gaining them in *ternes* *, in *ambes* †, or in *extraits* ‡, such an attempt to reconcile me to my misfortune would be too bad, and enough to ruin a poor man who has sacrificed every thing to this kind of lottery.

" As for those who pity me without being my friends, without much caring for me, and only for the purpose of annoying our lords of the ministry and of finance nobly leagued against me, a poor and ill-advised link boy,—tell them, Madam, that my place of exile is painted to them, or that they themselves have painted it, in hideous colours, in order to excite your compassion. But, for the sake of truth, I ought to tell you that it is very pretty. In truth, the waters and the fields have not the appearance of the month of May. The birds are silent, the swallows are not near their arrival, and the wild geese fly so high that they would be unable to distinguish between a courtier and an honest man. Nevertheless, when calmness reigns, imagination gives to the fields more than the reality takes from

* A lottery term in France. † Idem. ‡ Idem.

them. The walks are dry, and all the roads from hamlet to hamlet are formed of the green sward. You double your pace without labour, and the fire welcomes your return, having a fagot at bottom, some stumps in front, and some chips for a pediment; it dissipates the damp, and, saving respect, is worth more than the sun. But, say they, society? Have I not my capuchin *, to whom I demonstrated yesterday, that the fleas, of which he maintains a nursery, are very detrimental to agriculture, inasmuch as the time spent in scratching oneself is so much lost to the cause of labour; that beards are even more so, since the dews from heaven and the fat of the land stick to them, and are thus turned from their proper destination; that our empty pockets, from which the clergy are agog to draw coin, are, compared with well lined fobs of the sixty farmers general, as lean cows to the fat ones mentioned in Scripture. What more shall I add?—for I say so many things that in the end I shall be burned alive. Have I not the company of the good people, the farmers and vassals of a foolish but good lord, who at times is their dupe, even voluntarily †? But they love me; for when

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* Father Etienne, confessor to the Dowager Marchioness.

† We find in the Domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau, the recital of a fact, pointed enough, which explains, among others, the term "voluntary dupe."

"In 1740 and 1741 the price of corn reached four livres the bushel, and, at times, five livres. My farmers, who owe their rent

a man has sown good works the harvest comes early or late. On every occasion, and on every pretence, these people remind me that their fate is confided to my care, and they make me happy, by being so through me. For it is the performance of our duty, it is good works that constitute life; the rest is mere vegetation. These good people, who overwhelm me with grapes, and apples, and pears, and nuts, have a correct judgment, an attitude of their own, and an amicable mode of accost-

in grain, did not pay, liking better to be in arrears with me, and sell their prodnce. My rent collectors, such as I describe them, seldom pressed the farmers, and this created great arrears, which, valued upon the footing of market tariffs, would have amounted to a considerable sum. The priest came to see me at Paris the following year, and performed his calling by talking to me of my poor tenants, telling me that in the country they were made to pay corn for corn. I did not hesitate to tell his reverence that I would do as others did.

" 'Sir,' said he, 'you will, then, allow me to console them with this promise, and to assure them that you will receive in payment, corn for corn?'

" I consented. In the afternoon, my friends laughed at me well. But my word was given; I kept it, and they made up their arrears, with corn at nine sous a bushel *. O ye who read this! understand well that to be an honest man it is not necessary to be so simple as I was, and still am, in most things. On the contrary, to be a very honest man, you must be well informed; but it is better to be too stupid than too cunning in that sense, and your word should never be broken. Besides, keep clear of such details, since you have agents. But when you give judgment, let it be on the side of mercy, and to confer benefits."

* As we have already stated, these memoirs were addressed by the author to his children, long before their birth.

ing me, which makes me satisfied with myself, and which I have rarely been able to obtain from people in good society. The black hats of the district are a little more embarrassing; but, after having raised them in their own estimation, by putting them at their ease and caressing them, I give them a lesson, by shaking hands with the first peasant of my acquaintance that I meet, and kissing the foreheads of his children. All this amuses me, because it is just, and brings sons and brothers closer together. Besides, I have still good company, although female: this is the little mare which you gave me, and which, save your respect, resembles you; for the dear little beast is gentle, very even tempered, sober, unpretending, and free from bad counsel,—rather timid, it is true—but facility in taking fright becomes the fair sex so well! *"

"Do you see me escorting at night a troop of ladies —not always to the bowers of effeminacy, but training them up to walk upon flints, climb over hedges, leap ditches, and enter thickets—and returning with them at night scathless and laughing, to the great detriment of my bread and lettuces? All is action and motion around us, except that the distinctive feature of my little habitation is, that each is as much master of it as I am myself. * * * * * *

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort.

"You ask me what your friend is doing*. This morning, as I was about to mount my horse, I saw her door open, and I entered. It was seven o'clock. She slept so calmly, and her eye-brows were so cloudless that her sleep resembled the repose of a good conscience. My real father of the Church, the good natured La Fontaine, says, upon an occasion pretty nearly similar, 'Let the same be given to me; I shall know what to do with it.' For my own part I did nothing, but drew back softly, and it was only the better to mount my horse. To teach them to sleep another time, I set out for a long ride. On my return, by accident I placed my nose against the window. It is right you should know that my lawn is a field, and that field, newly mowed, was covered with haymakers, among whom I saw two white birds with black heads, each with a pitchfork in its hand, turning up my hay in a desperate manner. Of these birds, the one was from Switzerland†, the other from Germany‡. They returned to the house in perspiration, with the pitchforks in their hands, to demand payment, one with only an illumined tint, the other quite red. In the afternoon it became cool: a chair was brought for my

* Madame de Pailly.

† The same Madame de Pailly.

‡ Julianna Dorothee Sylvia, born Countess of Kunsberg, then for two years past, the widow of Count Alexander Louis of Mirabeau. She continued to reside with the Marquis of Mirabeau, and died on the 14th of November 1772.

mother, and placed by the side of the little river. All her female court were around, amusing themselves with preventing the ducks from passing. Higher up, servants in jackets were fishing for crawfish, and a German footman was disputing in his vernacular tongue with a huge crawfish, which should relinquish his finger to the other. I do assure you it was not without pain that the German carried the point. But note this well,

For the moral is worth an apologue.

" I requested that the mowers might be told to approach and mow before us. One of them was disputing with his comrade upon the gift of misery. His name is Pilon; he is a prime fellow, and labours with good will.

" ' I work all day, the whole year round, without intermission,' said he. ' I never want work; I deny myself everything, and yet I can never make both ends meet. My goods are worth more than yours; you are not so strong as I am, and yet you prosper.'

" ' Faith!' replied the other, whose name is Audouin, ' I was a long time ill. It comes of itself.'

" And this was true:—do you know why? The fact is, that Audouin has a good wife and Pilon a slut. My mother soon returned to the house, and shortly after I disposed of the walking company. I conducted them by some rather troublesome paths, and then pushed them into a copse of five years' growth.

"'Oh! my new head dress!—Oh! my mourning ruffles for Catherine Opalinski!'

"To obviate the inconvenience of seeing so many fine things perish, they placed the tails of their gowns over their heads.

"'I have read in Rabelais,' said I to them, 'that Pantagruel arrived in a country where the rump sat down first. Try to turn it to another use.'

"On receiving this hint they immediately borrowed from the crawfish above mentioned their mode of advancing, and got out of the scrape pretty well. Such are the benefits of reading and travelling*!"

"You wish to have some news.—I will tell you that twice one no longer makes two, or, at least, I have reason to think so: for in this house one and one make half a dozen devils who quarrel the whole day with high words, and get reconciled in whispers, at my expense. As I am fond of order, I am always committed by such people. I war with them only when they insist upon detaining my messenger, as they do each time they have a letter to write in the space of three days, which the courier gives them. Instead of correcting themselves, they have resolved to drag me into the vice of idleness; and they come to my chamber to induce me to commit a mortal sin. You know that literary people are rather weak under temptation, and I swear

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated July 7th 1763.

to you that St. Anthony was never hugged in such a manner. They came to my room; I frowned at the top of my face and laughed at the bottom. One took a chair, and another a stool, and there they sat.

"'Brother, will you be so good as to finish this fine narrative?'

"I took up a stick: but when I had turned one of them out, the other came in, and they assumed such laughing faces as I think Madam Potiphar never wore when she found herself rejected by the late Mr. Joseph, who refused also to tell her a story. When at last I evacuated the fortress, left them in possession, and they were quite sure that I should not return, they assembled the whole house, and put every thing in confusion. My fine tapestry of the castle where I used to see Æneas and Alexander so civilised that at every opening of the door they used to balance and incline by way of salutation, was now so grievously nailed that hereafter the two heroes will not be able to move from their places. Æneas, who was surprised in the cavern in the embraces of Dido, will be obliged to embrace her to eternity—a punishment till now unknown, and which he well deserves to the utmost rigour, though it is not the way to warm the frozen Trojan. Lately, I made a short journey to Montargis, and to my two days I added Sunday, being well pleased to escape a high mass. The ladies had only the Saturday to turn every thing at home upside down;

and in that one day they carried away all my presses, and all the shelves with which my room was surrounded, but which, according to their taste, were not finished in an artist-like manner. They thrust my books into a corner, nailed upon uniform shelves I know not how many rags and ribands, and overwhelmed me with gildings, looking-glasses, and other graceful things. In fine, they persecuted me with elegances, and knew not what to think of to torment me. God, nevertheless, has just punished one, who is caught, and I hope the other will soon follow; for, at a time of life when I could suffice for a whole collection of such clacking clocks, I remarked, that whenever one was out of order another was not far from being in the same state *."

To draw nearer the particular subject of our work, to whom we shall shortly return, we terminate these extracts with a few words which the Marquis writes in reference to his eldest daughter, and by the recital of a trifling incident, in which we find Mirabeau, then fourteen years old, whom we shall not afterwards quit.

"My eldest daughter is beautiful, and so tall that I should have made you laugh by my attitude, when by way of favour, they made me lead her out of the parlour. I did not know whether it was proper that

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated June 28th 1764.

I should hand her out. I was completely astonished to find a great girl caressing me. I allowed myself to be led; I kissed her hand; in a word, I had the appearance of a poor fool, quite glad and happy*. This great girl, in her manners and awkwardness, has some good points, a good heart, a noble mind, a lively temper, and especially something superabundant in her composition and her nature. In a word, she is a magnificent exaggeration†. This colossal nun is a phenomenon: I know nothing more majestic than her stature; her face resembles mine, without much difference in the proportions, except that her eyes, though equally large, are less open, but brighter, and more tender. Now, of what use is all this?—what can be made of her in a sepulchre? This white veil makes me ill when I see it‡!"

"A thought invariably struck me each night the instant I put my hand upon the first button of my coat to undress myself; it said to me:

"'There is your discharge from one of the days allotted you: what use have you made of it?'

"Here, madam, is an account of my doings of yesterday.

"For some time past my son and his sister were in

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated October 24th 1757.

† Letter from the same to the same, dated July 30th 1763.

‡ Letter from the same to the same, dated August 2nd 1763.

a prodigious hubbub of business and motion. He, talkative, hasty, impetuous, and merry, as you know him to be, and moreover intoxicated with the solemn opportunity of creating a bustle, making a display, and roaring sufficiently to crack earth and sky. She*, a tall girl, pretty enough, but with hands like a carpenter's tool,—gentle, good, gay, the heartiest laugher in France, witty, though she appears simple and childish, possessing a retentive memory, awkward in her attitudes, wanting decision, complying, meditative when she is not laughing, for traces are beginning to be visible in her eyes and in her manners of that mild melancholy which shows that the vine is in blossom; in short, she has the behaviour of the convent in all its pomp, for she places her gloves behind her back. She is, moreover, well informed, understands Latin, draws prettily and accompanies on the harpsichord a very pretty voice.

" Now, you must know that yesterday, our gardener, who is a good lad, though he understands nothing about trees, married Mary, the daughter of my son's famous female farrier. Out of this arose preparations without number, and a tumult and bustle between the brother, who wished to do honour to his nurse, whom he much loves, and the sister, occupied day and night in capari-

* Caroline Elizabeth, born September 5th 1747, married October 18th 1763, to Gaspard Charles of Lasteyrie, Count, and since Marquis, du Saillant.

soning the great fat bride, upon whose little finger she could ride any day. Suffice it to say, that my son gave away the bride, a high mass was granted to them, at which all the household attended, with the exception of my heretics* and myself, although my mother, be it said, had warned me that it was always a good thing to go to mass. I shall pass over the nuptials and the bridal feast in silence: the public papers will instruct you sufficiently. In the afternoon the whole posse came to the castle, with Nabonne, the village fiddler, at their head. This worthy orchestra in himself had played at mass, during the time of the elevation, the air of 'les folies d'Espagne' in a manner that edified everybody. These worthy people are pretty well at their ease at my house: the party at piquet had only to move to another room where the worthy folk were dancing, and the children, those faces with eyes so bright and countenances so ingenuous, that they always affect me, were addressing me with 'Good day, my Lord!' one seizing my cane, another pulling a button, &c. As some great personages † rouged themselves to hide from the vulgar eye that their haughty soul was displeased with its case, so the Lord of Bignon, although it was then rather sultry, was desirous of making one of the joyous

* The widow of Alexander Louis, and Dupont de Nemours, who, at the age of twenty-four, at that time, was on a visit to the Marquis. Both of them were protestants.

† Augustus, Mazarin, &c.

throng. He led out the bride to dance, and thought to come off with a minuet; but the female farrier, her mother, had forgotten to include such an ingredient in her daughter's education. It was, therefore, necessary to proceed at once to a country dance, for I do nothing as a matter of course. Ah, Countess! do you know what occurred to me? A moral thought, but wholly moral: in touching Mary's arm, firm, fat, and muscular, an arm fit for a hammer—to say all, that fine portion of thought which a certain author * states to travel immediately to the end without caring for the middle, gave the lie to his definition. I reflected then on the coming task of my gardener, and, placing myself entirely in his situation, as I did lately in that of king and ministers, faith! I was frightened. I swear to you that it was the first time in my life that a similar circumstance happened to me with a person of her sex; and as I thought that the imagination was always young, I could have sworn that even at the age of ninety a similar fright would never have come upon me to humble me.

"'Ah! what are we?' I exclaimed, on quitting the dance. I mentioned my mishap to those heretics, who, no doubt, have made mischief; and I retired to digest my shortness of breath, and to promise that another time I would go to high mass †."

* Montaigne.

† Letter already quoted from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated July 24th 1763.

Obliged to terminate this digression, for which we shall not perhaps be reproached, in order again to enter upon our task, which is becoming laborious, we will admit that, starting from the present period, our correspondence presents no longer the father in any other character than one of always increasing severity, excited by the excusable levity and thoughtlessness of youth,—by the imprudent impetuosity of the mother,—by the artificial manœuvres of Madam de Pailly,—by the deep aversion of an old servant named Grévin, who, nobody knows how, exercised an extraordinary influence over the Marquis of Mirabeau.

"The eldest boy might well be called a still-born child. He appears to me, at least up to this time, intended for nothing but a fool; almost an ungovernable maniac, and possessing all the vile qualities of the maternal stock. As he is now to have a number of select masters, and as, from his confessor down to his comrade, all are in correspondence with me, I shall be able to see the nature of the beast, and I do not think any thing good will ever be made of him *."

The child was soon taken from Poisson, "who had failed with him, and was beyond him; for we cannot slacken the bridle to him any more than we can curb

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated 19th of April 1763.

him *. I must take him under my own care; for he fears me, and only me. But I cannot tie myself to this inexplicable and incurable perversion of intellect: I have other duties to fulfil, in order to justify the reputation, quite undeserved, which Providence has given me, by paying me in the coin of honest men's esteem, which is well worth any other kind of payment †. The eldest has hitherto justified all that he promised; this is saying everything. He is going to the academy at Angers, which is renowned, in order to remove him from the filth of Paris ‡.

This resolution was soon abandoned.

"In my perplexity I have taken a middle course, and persuaded honest Sigrais §, with whose opinions and manners you are acquainted, to assist me. I adopted the true mode of inducing him to accept my offer, not only by concealing nothing from him, but by exaggerating the truth. To be brief, he has undertaken it for the whole time necessary to decide the thing, and to make a passage between the paternal mansion and the freedom of the lessons ||. He will

* Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated January 15th 1764,

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, and to the Countess of Rochefort, dated October 20th and 23rd 1763.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated November 20th 1763.

§ An old retired field officer, a relative and friend of the family.

|| Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 15th 1764.

produce the most advantageous results his talents will permit, for he has, as in certain pears, a part that is stony and another soft *.

Meanwhile, the Marquis was soon persuaded that his regimen was too lenient, and that a stricter was necessary, "to the inquisitive and devouring nature of that rascal. You are acquainted with the noble and almost romantic soul of Segrais. He is quite taken with him, he is fascinated; he extols that memory which absorbs every thing, without being willing to understand that sand also receives every impression, and that it is not sufficient to receive, but it should also retain and keep. He magnifies the urchin's goodness of heart, which is only a faint and common-place kindness towards the little creatures who place him at his ease, and to whom he is allied by an instinct of meanness. He vaunts his parrot mind; in short, he will make him worse, and I must look to it †."

The unfatherly tone, let us rather say, the animosity of such language, was the forerunner of severe measures, which we find realised some weeks after.

"My rude son is at last placed in a residence well suited to his deserts. Willing to give him the

* Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated April 2nd 1764.

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated June 2nd 1764.

finishing stroke by a public education, I have placed him with the Abbé Choquard *. This man is stern, and enforces punishment when necessary. I have told him not to be sparing of it, and have given him my reasons. This last attempt made and fulfilled, should there be no amendment, as I hope for none, I shall send him from this part of the country †."

Separated from Sigrais, whom he tenderly loved, placed in a school which they made appear to him like a severe prison, Gabriel experienced, in addition, an increase of chastisement, more than usually irksome.

" As I did not wish that a name shining with some lustre should be bandied along the benches of a school of correction, I had him entered under the name of Peter Buffière ‡. This obstinate boy wept and reasoned to no purpose. I told him to earn my name, and I would restore it to him, but only when he deserved it ||."

Meanwhile, however sad these presages, the faults did not continue like the punishment. The amendment of which the Marquis had no hope, as the reader has just seen, was obtained by the solicitude, at first

* The Abbé Choquart kept at Paris a military school in high repute.

† Letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 2nd 1764.

‡ Name of an estate, in Limousin, belonging to the Marquis of Mirabeau.

|| Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 8th 1764.

austere, afterwards affectionate, of the Abbé Choquart, who declared, "that he had more than half subdued and reclaimed Mr. Peter Buffière *;" and Gabriel began all at once to learn with a rapidity and success such as was never before witnessed. He assiduously exercised his memory, which afterwards became a prodigious repository of the most diversified knowledge, and in several respects the most elaborate. He studied the classic dead languages, and we have a thousand proofs of his tenacity of memory in this respect. He joined to it the study of modern tongues, such as English, Italian, German, and Spanish, all of which were familiar to him from his youth. He applied himself passionately to mathematics †, picturesque and geometrical

* Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated July 17th 1764.

† In the Biographical Essay, published in 1800 (and republished in 1820) by the younger Gassicourt, it is stated in page 43 of the first edition and 39 of the second, that Mirabeau could never acquire mathematics, although he himself has written that he worked at them "from his tenderest youth." (Original letters from Vincennes, vol. ii. page 289). The refutation is in the following passage from one of the letters from the same collection.

"In two years I have got on in mathematics beyond the differential and integral calculus." (same Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iii. page 24); and the truth of Mirabeau's assertions are proved by domestic documents. We say no more on this subject, further than to declare what we shall by and by prove: that there are almost as many errors as facts in this notice, as well as in all the others. The reason is simple: the authors, instead of limiting

drawing. Music, which he played at sight, and which he investigated even to the dryness of composition, and singing, in which he excelled, were his favourite recreations. Riding, fencing, dancing, swimming, and tennis were his exercises, and in them he distinguished himself above all the young men of his years.

At this period (1764) a detection took place which constituted the most bitter of the Marquis's grievances against his wife, and produced an increase of his habitual and persevering rigour towards his son *. It appears that the latter, already necessitous, and deprived of everything by the harshness, perhaps less parsimonious than systematic, of his father, secretly received certain pecuniary aids from the Marchioness, then an exile from her husband's house.

" I have learned that she used to send money to that reprobate. It is a singular plague to hae a

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themselves to speak of Mirabeau as a public man, whom all the world knows, were desirous of writing his private life with which they were unacquainted, because they wanted documents worthy of credit.

* The feelings of the Marquis towards one and the other, may be judged of from the following passage :—

" The twenty years which I have passed with this woman have been so much time spent in fits of the gravel. In the time of my greatest anguish, I said to Madame de Pailly—' This is nothing; the real cause of my vexation is her son, who is growing up to man's estate.' "—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 14th 1777.*

wife who has led me a sad life for the last twenty years, and now employs the means she does, or does not possess in debauching the rotten part of my family *."

Gabriel, carried away by the fire of his age and temperament, and by his prodigious faculties, surrounded by the snares of hatred, and blackened in the jealous eyes of his father, was debarred from all correspondence with or counsel from the maternal branch of his family.

" I am told that the grandmother † is greatly offended at not hearing from him. I reply that his youth is too fiery; and that I have ordered that all correspondence shall be cut off from without."

" I replied, that in consequence of the wildness of his youthful temper, I had given orders that he should hold no correspondence with any one; that if he profits by the education he is now receiving, he will not be wanting in the respect he owes to his family, and that henceforward they may rely upon me on this score ‡."

It appears that at this period the Marquis of Mirabeau's domestic advisers, who, in their hatred, were conti-

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count (since Marquis) du Saillant, his son-in-law, dated August 30th 1764.

† The Marchioness of Vassan, mother of the Marchioness of Mirabeau.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 31st 1764.

nually exciting him against his son, first suggested the project of sending away Gabriel, then fifteen years and a half old *.

" Peter Buffière was going away, and he suspected that it was not to better his condition. A deputation from his companions came to me, with a large scroll of a petition, signed by them all. I consented to his remaining with them for three months longer, during which time I shall have him narrowly watched. This looks as if we had gained some ground during the last three months, for at that time nobody would keep him. I am, however, well aware that it will only make me carry my cross instead of burying it *.

This father, however, whose mind was thus kept in a state of constant irritation, appeared for a time to experience his former fluctuations. Alone at Paris, free from the malevolent suggestions of Madame de Pailly and her worthy allies, he seemed for a time restored to his own impressions.

" I must tell you, that although I have still much to do, I entertain some hope of reclaiming the eldest, who, after all, should he cease being a madman, will turn out a rogue that will manage to get on †."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 7th 1782.

† Unpublished Letter of the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated February 14th 1766. It was about this time that

But the Marquis soon became a prey to gloomy suspicion, being again influenced by perfidious advice. New plans of exile entered his mind.

" Your brother-in-law is so unruly, that his friends and masters, who for such a length of time have misled me with vain hopes, no longer conceal from me the truth about him. I shall leave him there * until, according to my plan, I send him to the north, and shall take such steps as will prevent this scourge from

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the extraordinary reply attributed to Mirabeau, then sixteen years old, by P. Chaussard (see private life at the commencement of the 'Esprit de Mirabeau,' vol. i. p. 12, and Cadet Gassicourt, page 5 of the first edit., and page 3 of the second), must have taken place. According to their accounts, the Prince of Conti, surprised at the bold and determined expression of the child's countenance, said to him—

" What would you do if I were to box your ears? "

Mirabeau is reported to have answered:—" The question would have puzzled me before the invention of double-barrelled pistols."

We cannot persuade ourselves to attribute this silly and heartless joke to a prince who always proved himself brave and generous in war; for the anecdote can relate only to the last Prince of Conti but one (Louis Francis, born August 13th 1717, and who died August 2nd 1776). Besides, it is sufficient to recollect that Mirabeau, as we have just shown, was, at the age of sixteen, kept under such severe restraint, that there is not the least probability of his having been allowed to visit princes. The anecdote must therefore be made to relate to the period of his presentation (see Book III. of this work). But, in 1771, he was two and twenty years of age, and at that time both the answer and the question would have been not only improbable but impossible.

* At the Abbé Choquart's boarding school.

appearing at those places where he would hang upon me like a log *."

He, however, soon entertained a more natural design, that of making Gabriel enter the army.

"Your brother-in-law is continually weeping over his disgrace. He has tried another letter. I have sent him word that to err and to forgive is the way of God towards man, and of man to God; but that between man and man the distance is too great for it to be thus. For a long time to come there will be two men in him: the one heedless who will forget the penitent, and the other penitent who will recollect the heedless. What is to be done? We are moulds of imperfection. As, however, we must advance with increasing years, your brother-in-law is going to change his leading-strings, being about to enter rather a rough school, which the Marquis of Beuvron has recommended to me. This is the Berri cavalry, commanded by the young Marquis of Lambert, a man of rare qualities, and much feared on account of his severity. He receives young men as volunteers, and keeps a tight hand over them †."

"With regard to my sons," says the Marquis, in another letter, "the eldest is still a cross. I am going

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated December the 13th 1766.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated February 28th 1767.

to send him as a volunteer to the strictest and roughest military school. The Marquis of Lambert, a man put together like one of the good old times, has founded this school in his regiment. He asserts that the exclusive atmosphere of honour, and a cold and harsh regimen, are capable of curing the most disordered lungs, even were the disease a natural one. I asked him for a Mentor, an officer who, without reasoning or eloquence, possessed instinctively a natural contempt and disgust for every thing mean. He told me that his man answers this description. I have in fact seen two fathers thank him for having formed their sons *. In everything Lambert is as much feared as the grand-provost; and his major, whom he will appoint my son's Mentor, is just as severe as I could wish. I rely upon Grévin † as another Mentor, and as sole master-servant to this young man. I was asked for a man whom he might know as having instructions from me to watch and denounce him, in order that he may not consider himself an object of military espionage, a bad system among respectable people. I shall feel no reluctance in being severe towards him, because it is both my right and my duty ‡."

On the 19th of July 1767, Gabriel joined the

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated 31st March 1767.

† See page 273.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated March 21st 1767. To avoid repetitions, at least in the text, we here insert an extract from the same letter, in which

choose, and a cold and well closed prison shall moderate his appetite and reduce his bulk *."

After this "prank, which did not pass off without some noise †," and an incident which we shall presently mention, Mirabeau secretly quitted his corps, and sought refuge at Paris with his father's intimate friend, the Duke of Nivernois, to whom, either with justice, or merely as an excuse for his conduct, he complained most bitterly of the Marquis of Lambert's harshness, and even cruelty,—"a parcel of recriminating lies, almost persuasive by their eloquent effrontery ‡." Nothing could equal the violence of the Marquis's language on the occasion.

"With regard to this scoundrel, I cannot precisely say what it costs me to cast him from me ||. It was this that sealed his doom §. From the moment I saw, by his letter to the Duke of Nivernois, the turn he gave to his romance, I felt the bolt which already shuts him out from my heart more firmly closed;

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 30th 1768.

† Unpublished Letter from the Countess of Rochefort to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 2nd 1768.

‡ Unpublished Letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768.

|| Unpublished Letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 26th 1768.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 28th 1768.

and when I reflected upon this hideous assemblage of anti-truths and ingratitude, I felt my father's spirit reproach me for having entertained any hope from this wretch after so many trials *"

Such language, applied to a young man of eighteen, and from a father who had declared that "he should feel no reluctance in adopting a course of severity †," was an earnest of violent measures. Count du Saillant, however, interfered, and took charge of his brother-in-law, "whom he confined in the Hotel Nivernois, surrounding him with spies, and having discovered his connexion with a set of thieves, conveyed him, six and thirty hours after, to Saintes ‡, where his regiment was in garrison.

An explanation took place "in presence of the colonel, the lieutenant-colonel, and the Mentor Grévin ‖." Gabriel alone, in the presence of his superiors, his enemies, and a brother-in-law armed with full powers by an irritated father, defended himself with energy. He alleged, with regard to the losses at play, the seduction, no doubt preconcerted, perhaps instigated, of an example

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768.

† Letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 21st 1767.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 26th 1768.

‖ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768.

too strong for a young volunteer of eighteen. With regard to the discipline, he alleged the excessive severity of a commander who inspired as much dread as the "grand provost *;" a severity, we must however observe, that had an effect directly contrary upon the ardent and lofty soul of Gabriel, who, at a later period said, "A Lambert was capable of ruining me, a Viomenil might have obtained everything from me†:" and who, even at that time, expressed himself with great energy. This may be seen in the following passage from a letter written a short time prior to his departure for Corsica.

"A colonel, unworthy of commanding officers better than himself, used every possible means to ruin me. He did not succeed, but I will not expose myself a second time to his perfidy; for I swear, upon my honour —an oath I shall never break—that I will resign my commission, and enter a foreign service, if I am forced to continue under him ‡."

But a pecuniary loss was not the only censurable act committed by the young officer: another was discovered. The Marquis of Lambert had fallen in love with the young and beautiful daughter of an archer of Saintes.

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* Unpublished Letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1767.

† Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. page 295.

‡ Unpublished Letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 5th 1769.

She had produced the same effect upon Mirabeau, and, as is customary in such cases, the sub-lieutenant supplanted the colonel. The latter, naturally harsh, and previously prejudiced, authorised and instigated, moreover, by Mirabeau's father and by Grévin, insulted his more fortunate rival, or caused, or allowed it to be done, by a gross caricature, which made Mirabeau the laughing-stock of the whole regiment. Lambert then made the authority of his rank minister to his wounded self-love. Gabriel, thus punished beyond measure, and being perfectly well aware of the cause of this severity, quitted his post while on duty, and fled to Paris, where, as we have just stated, he complained to no purpose.

The inquiry made at Saintes, on his return, proved to be the monstrous phenomenon of a love affair. "It even discovers a promise of marriage, and every other species of madness *." Count du Saillant and the Colonel, "those worthy and zealous young men, set out for Rochelle, and the Marquis of Lambert withdrew the writings. The rascal is to be imprisoned. His brother-in-law, who has spoken so much in his favour, is now forced to admit that the fellow is a sink of vice. All this may be termed shocking for the head, the stomach, and the purse of your elder brother, and as you can do

* Unpublished Letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768. The totally different account given by Peuchet, vol i. page 74, is mere invention.

nothing in it, I should have done wisely if I had said nothing to you about it. But it is most difficult to keep one's heart entirely closed toward those whom we love and esteem *."

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* Letter already quoted from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th. At the very time that the Marquis evinced so little the feelings of a parent towards his son, he was most actively engaged in an undertaking altogether philanthropic. At his country seat, at Fleury, near Meudon, which he had bought for his mother, he built ovens for the purpose of baking bread, on an economical plan, which was extolled by the sect to which he belonged.

"The Abbé Bandeau is staying permanently with us. We are are making economical bread. The rascally bakers deceived us in the samples made at Paris. We bake six hundred pounds weight of it every day in my oven. Poor people scramble for it. It has got into vogue. The Duke of Choiseul sends twice a-week a messenger for Fleury-bread, and so does Madame du Deffant. Only conceive what it is to have reduced Madame du Deffant to home-made bread! What odd people! In all the provinces and on every estate of any note, mills for economical grinding are erected. You should reflect upon this; it becomes a duty. Think what it is to procure for the poor a saving of more than a third in the price of previous consumption!"—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 3rd* 1768.

"I have here a bakehouse, in which nine hundred pounds of bread are daily baked for the poor; and if my oven enabled me to make double that quantity, it would be consumed. Instead of being expensive, there is, as you will perceive in the 'Ephémérides'—'Notice to honest men,' a profit which may be made available for streets or other public works. I am going this winter to introduce economical grinding and a similar bakehouse at Bignon. If God grant me life, I shall have these ovens everywhere. I shall give you an account of the immense advantage they are of to the people. Here I buy the corn, but there, where I have my own corn, my own

This is, in all its simplicity, and according to unexceptionable documents even furnished by Mirabeau's adversaries, the fact which, having been exaggerated by prejudiced enemies, caused his first imprisonment, laid the foundation of the system of excessive severity always pursued against him, and served as the foundation of all those suspicions and accusations that always afterwards beset him. If we have dwelt upon it, and supported it by extracts, which, if they are not useless are at any rate tedious, our object was merely to present in its true light an incident upon which, from Mirabeau's earliest youth, were founded the charges of immorality that have been heaped upon his head, and to prove the sincerity of his own eloquent account of the matter †.

Let the following paragraph from it be read over again, as a justification not discussed, which may have left some doubt in the reader's mind.

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mill, and my own flour, I shall send the bannal right to the devil *, and leave every one at liberty. The people sell their corn, and I supply them with flour, and what is more, with bread, which is much cheaper, and saves them the labour of kneading improperly and at a loss. I am still hatching much more expensive plans."— *Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 18th* 1768.

† Original Letters written from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 196.

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* Let us state, for the information of those who might not be aware of it, that bannal right was a seigneurial right to compel the inhabitants to have their corn ground at the lord's mill.

"You confessed to me, in one of your letters, that you had been on the point of sending me to the Dutch colonies, whilst I was detained in the Island of Rhé. This made a deep impression on my mind, and has had a prodigious influence over the rest of my life."

It has been said, and even published, in the name of the Marquis of Mirabeau, that this intention never existed, but was invented by the prisoner to give some plausibility to his defence, and to gain more pity, by relating imaginary persecutions. Our readers shall judge for themselves.

We perceive by the letters before us that the effect of the dreadful accusations of the Marquis, a man of some consideration in the world, and much respected in his own family, made his excellent brother a sharer in his exaggerated resentment, so much so that the Bailli wrote—

"Examine whether the crimes of this wretch deserve that he should be for ever excluded from society; in that case, sending him to the Dutch colonies is, as you say, the best thing to be done. We shall then be sure never again to see on the horizon a scoundrel born to bring sorrow to his parents and disgrace to his family *."

Such is the language, held under the father's influ-

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 10th 1768.

nce by the Bailli, a man noble and virtuous, prudent nd moderate, and even indulgent, whom we shall show hereafter alternately accusing and defending his nephew, ccording as Gabriel, being absent, was unable to ward off the blows dealt by a continually increasing aversion; or, being momentarily placed with his uncle, was able to combat with explanations, or to deny by his conduct, the calumny which from his infancy had unremittingly been cast upon him, and remained coupled with his name even beyond the grave.

Let us examine, for a moment, the fatal effect of the Marquis's prejudices upon his brother, bearing in mind that the latter, besides his natural kindness of heart, and habitual mildness of character, produced by age, reflection, and experience of men and things, possessed, in his personal recollections and his conscience, some grounds of excuse for the impetuosity of a very young man, as he himself had once displayed no inconsiderable share of the exaggeration peculiar to the blood of Mirabeau. A specimen of the Bailli's follies when young, is contained in the following passage.

" I well know the character of my race. I, in some measure, bore witness of the Bailli's youth. During three or four years he did not spend four days in the course of the year out of prison. The moment he beheld the light of day he would drink brandy till he was furious, and then fall upon every man who came in his way, till he got knocked down, and taken to prison.

But he was, notwithstanding, very honourable, and his superiors, then men of great experience, always promised my mother that he would one day become an excellent man. Nobody however could stop him, till he all of a sudden stopped himself *."

The Colonel, having thus punished Mirabeau in his self-love and in his attachment, might undoubtedly have considered himself sufficiently avenged: but he was not yet satisfied, neither was the Marquis.

" I have been employed only in assuaging the impatience of M. de Lambert, who, never thinking of distances †, had hardly written to me, when he was disappointed at the non-arrival of all he had asked me for, and of some plan of arrangement. As I requested M. de Choiseul to avoid noise as much as possible, he proposed to send an order to Mr. Peter Buffière to take a letter to Marshal de Senneterre, at Rochelle, who would immediately have arrested and sent him to the Island of Rhé ‡."

The father's bitter resentment was thus fomented by the implacable colonel. Another persecutor of Gabriel, Grévin §, his ignoble Mentor, and Madame de Pailly's

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated January 26th 1770.

† One hundred and twenty leagues.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 16th 1768.

§ See page 283.

worthy auxiliary, had also a spite against the unfortunate young man.

" On the other hand, I have received a letter from Grévin. It is in to the usual style; but he speaks plain, calls the fellow a ' horrible monster,' presses me for my orders, and adds that he is capable of any thing *."

Let us now observe, in order that we may not have occasion to recur to it, that the animosity which the father had conceived against his son blinded him with respect to Grévin, as he continued to believe this man as a witness, and to employ him as a mentor, we might almost have said as an executioner, notwithstanding the opinion of the judicious Bailli, who wrote the following year—

" The man to whom you have confided him has spent some time here (the castle of Mirabeau), and is neither competent nor worthy to hold this trust †."

Let us further show, before we proceed, the striking contrast between this harshness and parental severity, and the other points of the Marquis of Mirabeau's character. This haughty parent describes himself in a letter written at nearly the same period.

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* The same Letter, from the Marquis to the Bailli, dated September 16th 1768.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 23rd 1769.

"You amuse me in speaking of the respectful terror which my future son-in-law * experiences at the moment he is about to pay me a visit. In general, from the noble bent in your back, your long and cold features, your hair prematurely grey †, and my right of primogeniture, people will naturally conclude, when they have seen you, and know me only from report, that I must be venerable, for venerable is now-a-days the polite term of my correspondents. But mind and tell them that I am the fellow with the big stick, who walks round the Luxembourg gardens in seventeen minutes, has not a single grey hair, and wants either a looking-glass, or to be pulled by the sleeve seventy times a day to be reminded that he is more than twenty;—who is, moreover, the friend of all who have never seen him; who, neither by himself nor by his shadow, was ever in any person's way; who never brought fear, nor embarrassment, nor evil to any body; who feels more than most men all it becomes his age to subdue; who supports all that is little, especially youth, which he is bound to uphold by the chin; and who contrives to be known and loved in a quarter of an hour ‡."

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* Jean Paul Clapier, Marquis of Cabris, who married, November 18th 1769, Louisa, third daughter of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

† The Bailli of Mirabeau was not fifty years old.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 30th 1769.

We have stated that Mirabeau was about to be confined in the fortress of the Island of Rhé.

"Do not trouble yourself any more about that good-for-nothing fellow. I think he is now engaged in the Island of Rhé, and properly recommended to the Bailli of Aulan. The Bailli's reputation is excellent; he is another witness which I am about to procure, as it is expedient to collect evidence from persons of some consequence, to keep the bolts of the gaol closed *."

"The Bailli of Aulan will be his future judge. I have only stated to him that the youth is impetuous, his judgment unsound, and that he is a liar by instinct. I have ordered Grévin to accompany him. You may easily conceive that if the Bailli condemns him he shall be removed †."

Yes, to go and die at Surinam!

What then was the cause of this prejudice in the Marquis—a prejudice which overcame his reason, in other respects strong and clear? It was a feeling more powerful than nature, which however acted in him; for numerous domestic papers show him to have been a good master, a good lord, and an excellent friend. Moreover, there are a thousand proofs that he evinced, towards his mother, a filial reverence akin to adoration.

* Unpublished Letter of the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 7th 1768.

† Unpublished Letters from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau and to the Countess of Rochefort, dated Sept. 20th and 22nd 1768.

How happened it, then and afterwards, that the effect of suggestions which tormented him at home, and to which the very cause whence they sprang should have prevented him from listening, did not yield to the disinterested evidence of strangers, totally free from any ground of suspicion, and of which he even spoke himself, without in the least inferring what must naturally have struck a mind less swayed by prejudice than his own?

"He is a rascal who possesses Satan's power of intrigue, and has the wit of a demon. The Marquis of Lambert told me the other day that he had divided the town and the province between reason and himself, and that, notwithstanding his detestable character, he could have found in the town of Saintes twenty thousand livres, which it does not possess *."

Mirabeau's influence thus described arose rather from his frankness and generosity than from any superiority of mind that he already displayed. He exercised the same power over all who were near him; and perhaps no man carried it to a greater extent. The

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated Oct. 18th 1768. Six years later other circumstances suggested to the Marquis a remark, the similitude of which is curious.

"Had he the disgraceful talent alone of making dupes, he would deserve only to be hanged. A merchant of Dijon said to Gassaud: 'he gets a great deal out of me, but all I possess is quite at his service.'"—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 2nd* 1778.

grievous injustice, which youth feels so strongly and repulses with so much vigour, did not spoil his excellent temper: he was easily appeased—a single demonstration could move, a word affect him.

"Lambert was still speaking when a sudden change took place: Peter Buffière gave up all his connexions, and promised to submit to imprisonment. He begged, as a favour, that Grévin might be left with him. (This was magnanimous!) He promised not to go out before the Marquis of Lambert came back, and then to return to the regiment, where he had so much to retrieve *."

No doubt this prompt and noble return affects the reader; but the heart of an infatuated father is not so easily softened.

"For my part, I wrote to him (the Marquis of Lambert) that this fool's clapper had been removed from the bell of the disconsolate prisoner and passionate lover; and that we should derive no other advantage from it than that of removing him without any noise that could be prejudicial to the family †."

At the Island of Rhé, as at Saintes, at Paris, and everywhere else, the unfortunate young man, whom a father had condemned without seeing or hearing him,

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated October 1st 1768.

† Same Letter.

inspired every one with interest. We are informed of it by his father.

" He bewitches the Bailli of Aulan himself, who, against my directions, permits him to walk in the citadel. He also fascinates my friends and the whole world *."

Mirabeau, on the other hand, wrote to his mother:—

" My affairs have taken a more favourable turn; the Bailli of Aulan, governor of the island, solicits the withdrawal of my *lettre de cachet*, and it seems decided that I shall soon proceed to Corsica †."

An expedition was actually in preparation. In one of the Marquis of Mirabeau's letters we find—

" I know very well, that when once let loose he will, within three months, provoke his confinement for life. However, I cannot keep Mr. Peter Buffière any longer in his cage, nor lose the opportunity of Corsica ‡. He is to accompany the legion of Lorraine, and serve in the infantry §, under the command of the Baron of Viomênil, Colonel of the legion. It is quite a different

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 15th 1769.

† The Letter already quoted, from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 5th 1769.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 27th 1769.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 13th 1769.

discipline to the former. I do not hope, however, that he will acquit himself better *."

Mirabeau, when about to complete his twentieth year, was preparing to quit his prison, or rather to exchange it for another. Loaded by his father with gloomy suspicions, sinister prognostics, prejudicial recommendations, and anticipated curses, he embraced a new career only to encounter greater fatigue and danger.

" The Baron of Viomênil, Colonel of the legion of Lorraine, has been represented to me as a proper man for him, and I have also been told that this service will suit his impetuosity. He fancies he can swallow every thing, but will get nothing but plenty of sword-thrusts, if he has the courage to face them. He has been recommended to them all; Count Devaux himself † told me, that they would hang him at the public expense if he did not prove worthy of his father‡."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis du Saillant, dated April 22nd 1769.

† Afterwards Marshal of France

‡ Letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, bearing date March 13th 1769. As the Marquis of Mirabeau was writing that very day to his second son, Andrew Boniface Louis, afterwards Viscount of Mirabeau, then fifteen years of age (he was born the 30th of November 1754), he softened his parental remonstrances with a tone of affection.

" Mr. Boniface, I am at least satisfied with your writing. But I am sure that you commit thirty-eight dozen of follies every day, and this makes my blood boil. Not that every body does not commit some while young, but yours should not warn every body

When Mirabeau left the island of Rhé, he met an officer at Rochelle who had been dismissed the service for a disgraceful action. This person wanted to become intimate with his young companion in arms, and took offence at Mirabeau's proper and prudent coldness. A duel ensued, in which the aggressor was wounded *. On this the reputable Grévin resumed his task.

" This devilish Peter Buffière is come out of the fortress of Rhé, a hundred times worse than he entered in; not through any of his companions there, but by dint of his own folly. He fought a duel at Rochelle, where he had been only two hours. I have had tidings from that poor Grévin, from Saint Jean d'Angely, and

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how little you mind yourself, and that if promotions were made in an inverse order, your marshal's baton would elevate you to the rank of commissioner of the stew-pan, and still it would be said, 'He is a good sort of fellow.' In fact, my friend, if you do not perceive where you are (with his brother-in-law Count du Saillant) how kindness may be allied to true dignity, all our care is thrown away upon you, and you too will remain incorrigible. This matter at least appertains as much to your interest as to mine. I received my name illustrious in the opinion of men, through the merit of those who had borne it; I shall leave it to my children in a favourable and creditable light. If they neglect to cultivate this portion of their inheritance, I would not give two farthings for the rest, and they will be beggars, though there are good kind of fellows even among them. This is, therefore, your business: think of it. Adieu! I shall wait till you are cleansed to embrace you."— *Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Chevalier Mirabeau, dated March 13th* 1769.

* Unpublished Letter from Peter Buffière to Count du Saillant, dated March 20th 1769.

from Dupuy. I am told that he struts about, swearing, fighting, wounding, and committing villanies such as were never heard of before *. This wretch would foil the devil, and has a score in his body †."

After a fatiguing, and even perilous journey in the mountains of Auvergne and the Vivarais, which he was obliged to cross through snow that lay twelve feet thick ‡, Peter Buffière arrived at Toulon, where his father told him most expressly that he was to take care not to be recognised. A letter makes us acquainted with the date of his departure.

" He will embark on the 16th of April 1769, on the plain which furrows itself; God grant that he does not some day use the oar there § !"

We shall incidentally remark that the Marquis was then disposing of the hand of his youngest daughter, whom he tenderly loved. The coincidence of this marriage with Mirabeau's departure gave the father an opportunity of expressing himself very differently respecting his two children.

" The nuptials of my daughter, a favour of Pro-

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, April 10th 1769.

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, June 19th 1769.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, April 22nd 1769.

§ Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, April 10th 769.

vidence, though not a festivity in which a parent is free from anxiety, will be placed between the fear of losing an interesting and precious generation*, and the

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 10th 1769. A former proposal of marriage had afforded the Marquis an opportunity of displaying that pride of nobility, to which his family were prone.

"I can arrange a marriage for Louisa (afterwards Madame de Cabris, then fourteen years of age) at any time. 1st, an income of three hundred thousand livres; 2ndly, a young man, well made, and kind—a virtuous character eighteen years of age. This is the fine side. See now the other:—the father, who is dead, was a farmer of the public revenue, and my fathers were never allied to publicans."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated June 28th* 1766.

"I have been indirectly informed that Madame de Pompignan would willingly have given us her son D'Orsay, who has an income of 300,000 francs a year. My first feeling was that I should deserve reproach from my ancestors for such an alliance, and that it would disgrace me personally, after the anti-financial noise I have made. A young counsellor, all lined with gold, has also been proposed to me, and I have not been able to come to any determination, owing to my daily habit of being only humbly addressed in some measure by men of that class. There is not one who does not in his letters load me with *respect*, though I am good for nothing, and dare to make them some return. I have received among other things, during the last ten years, a letter from a First President, beginning with these words:—'Sir, you are the protector of all the magistrates in the kingdom!' The idea respecting the duty of not allowing our children to derogate, founded on such delusions, might well prove without foundation; but my daughter, worthy of us, and of being consulted, replied, respecting these two proposals:—'I shall never change my name for a worse. I do not know what use to make of riches; but if they are necessary, I feel that I shall be able to acquire them for the family of which I may become a member.' She was then but twelve years old!—an excellent age. at which,

desire of getting rid of another which is odious, and incessantly keeps hot coals under my feet, and a sword suspended over my head."

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whilst playing near your father and mother, who were seriously discussing the future prospects of their children, you said to them —'Be not uneasy on my account; I shall manage to get on!'"— *Unpublished Letters from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 16th, and August 3rd 1768.*

MEMOIRS OF MIRABEAU.

BOOK III.

It is well known how, after many a battle and alternate ill-fortune and success too dearly bought, the Genoese who, since the thirteenth century, had succeeded the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Goths, and the Saracens in the possession of Corsica, were, in 1767, compelled to give up to France a domination which, though enforced, had ever been disputed by the spirit of independence inherent in an obstinate and warlike people. This cession did not render the Corsicans more disposed to submission than before. The French troops, commanded by the Marquis of Chauvelin, a general from the court, had experienced humiliations and losses. The courtier was superseded by the warrior; and Count Devaux, an experienced and active officer, supported by a considerable force, succeeded in a short time in putting down every insurrection.

This expedition had neither the interest of a defensive war, the charm of a daring invasion, nor the

excitement of conquest. It was merely an unjust abuse of power, the mere brutal act of a purchaser taking possession by force. It had therefore no attraction for Mirabeau's fancy; it had nothing in common with his inclinations. But, on the one hand, his notions were yet the mere goadings of instinct, and had not been matured into fixed principles. On the other hand, his taking a part in this war was the only means he had of getting out of prison. However, he soon viewed it in its proper light; and, at a subsequent period, we shall show him ascending the national tribune to abjure his forced participation in that expedition, and brand it as unjust and odious *.

Having arrived in Corsica, with the rank of second lieutenant†, Mirabeau distinguished himself by his zeal, his ardour, and his military talents, which even Lambert was reluctantly compelled to acknowledge. This was the result of his constant application. He won the esteem, affection, and confidence of the severe Viomenil, who subsequently gave him such proofs of it as must

* Session of the 30th of November, 1789. "I confess that my early youth was sullied by a participation in the conquest of Corsica; and I consider myself the more bound to make some reparation to that generous people, for what my reason condemns as a cruel injustice.

† Unpublished notes, in the form of a reference, to the autograph manuscript of the elaborate defence, addressed by Mirabeau to his father, dated from the Donjon of Vincennes, March 1st, 1778, page 287 to 436 of the first volume.

appear conclusive*. He was also noticed by the Viscount of Harembure, by Lieutenant-General Devaux, and by Major-General Guibert†. He obtained the friendship of Lieutenant-Colonel Villereau of his own regiment‡. In a word, his father, who, in allusion to him, had at first only thought proper to say, "This Corsican rover, who is about to attain his twenty-first year, and who, with his sense and skill, joined to a bad heart, would give plenty of work to an areopagus§;" his father, let us say, expressed himself in far different terms six weeks after.

"He has evinced remarkable bravery and intelligence||. He likes his corps and his commanders, and has many friends¶. As for his skill and sense, he has an active mind, and studies eight hours a day; he, perhaps, has not his equal. But God knows what kind of a headpiece we shall see**."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, from the 5th to the 11th of May 1771.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 162, 190; vol. ii. p. 23.

‡ Same letters from the Donjon, vol. i. p. 161.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 21st 1770.

|| Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 12th 1770.

¶ Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 14th 1770.

** The Letter already alluded to from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 12th 1770.

Confining ourselves merely to these few incidents, the only ones that remain of this first year of Mirabeau's life, we shall not allow ourselves to be detained by his love adventures in Corsica, of which there fortunately appeared only a short and fugitive account*. We have, however, some lengthy particulars in a very humorous and original style, written by himself. We at first curtailed and afterwards destroyed them, for as we are determined to keep within the bounds of that respect which the subject, the times, the public, and history require, we did not wish to add to the facts, and especially to the surmises of this nature, which are already but too plentifully scattered over Mirabeau's memory. Whenever, in the course of our labours, we have to handle some awkward episode which has been so much before the public as to preclude its omission or curtailment, we shall state it both with reserve and regret; and merely when necessary to reduce exaggerations to the just measure of truth, to rectify important facts, to prove the falsehood of calumny, and to set the character of Mirabeau in its proper light; for he has been as much misjudged by all men in his private life, as he has been by some in his political career. But be they explanations, illustrations, or denials relative to matters of a domestic nature or to public facts, we shall always support them with unimpeachable evidence.

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 438.

Mere hearsay, conjectures, and unsubstantiated assertions, which form the materials of so many biographies*, would but ill accord with a family work like the present.

This same necessity for truth, free from all hazardous and romantic additions, render it incumbent upon us to notice the first work, which, as it occupied the already striking mind of Mirabeau, displayed the natural propensity for writing, peculiar to his family, and gave him practice.

A eulogy on the great Condé compared with Scipio Africanus, has been mentioned, which he is said to have written, spoken, and, according to some, even published when only sixteen years of age, whilst he was at the Abbé Choquart's military school. As we have resolved to admit nothing in our biography but facts which are proved, and to reject that which is evidently false, it behoves us to say that the family never had any knowledge of this production, said to be the fruit of Mirabeau's youth; that its existence is not substantiated in any account of him; nor do we even find the slightest indication of it in the voluminous correspondence we possess, the link of which is quite unbroken, and commences a long time prior to his birth. It presents us, during the first thirty years of his life,

* The Dictionaries.—Chaussard, Cadet Gassicourt, Barthe, Peuchet, Mérilhou, &c. &c.

with almost daily particulars concerning his position, his impressions, and his labours.

There results, however, a strong presumption in its favour, from a letter published in 1776, in the "Gazette Littéraire," which may be ascribed to Mirabeau, as we shall show hereafter. We find in the text—

"At this time, 1769, some trifles of the Count of Mirabeau were printed;" and in a note, "'A Eulogy on the great Condé,' composed for a public festival, some pieces of poetry," &c.*

But whatever be the truth with regard to this pretended first composition, it is certain that in the course of his twentieth year, amid the marches, labours, and dangers of an irregular warfare, he was seriously occupied in writing a work, which was a miscellany of history, geography, and statistics, and the labour of which, in mere compilations, could not be very attractive to a mind so active as his, and at an age especially characterised by restlessness and impatience.

"At the end of the campaign, the Count of Mirabeau everywhere discovered traces of the devastations committed by the Genoese, and vestiges of their crimes. By this evidence of despotism he recognised his enemy: his heart beating with indignation could not contain itself, and his overflowing imagination, was

* Letter from S. M. (Saint Matthieu) to the authors of the "Gazette Littéraire," at the head of the "Treatise on Despotism." Paris. Lejay, 1792.

highly excited. He wrote, and drew a rapid picture of Corsican misery and Genoese crime *." Such are the terms in which Mirabeau speaks of his first work. Let us now hear his family.

" He has in some measure made himself master of the Corsicans; he has seen all their papers, and written their history, which, from the plan he has shown me, strikes me with surprise. It is a bold and spirited work †. The preface to his History of Corsica, which is to comprise only the last forty years, gives an account of preceding events.

" I assure you that at twenty-one you would not have done as much; and I, at forty, am unable to produce the hundredth part of it. I found that it contained clear principles laid down by a mind full of elevation, fire, nerve, and genius, and by a heart firm, strong, and good ‡." Mirabeau himself, though but little inclined to boast of his own writings, being well aware of the defects attendant on habitual precipitation, set some value on this his first production.

" This work was, no doubt, very incorrect, but full of fire and truth; and it contained true views and

* Letter from S. M. (Saint Matthieu) to the author of the " Gazette Littéraire," p. 21. Mirabeau said the same thing in the work entitled " Lettres de Cachet, and State Prisons," vol. ii. p. 127.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 14th 1770.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

facts relative to a country of which no correct account had ever been given, because mercenary writers (the Germanès) or fanatical enthusiasts (the Boswells) had alone undertaken the task*. Buttafoco, a colonel in the Corsican service, made me write the History of Corsica, and I certainly acquitted myself of it in a manner beyond what might have been expected from my youth. My father would never allow it to be published, notwithstanding the wish of all Corsica, and Buttafoco's entreaties. This was also the case with my topography of the island, which I had described step by step, under a personal survey, giving all possible particulars with regard to its politics, political economy, and history. These manuscripts are in Provence, and God knows whether I shall ever see them again†."

Mirabeau returned after more than a year's absence: this we learn from his father.

"As I had ordered him to travel privately into Provence, I allowed him, if his regimental duty permitted, to go and kiss his uncle's hand at Mirabeau‡."

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* Letter from S. M. to the authors of the Gazette Littéraire, p. 22.

† Unpublished Letter to Sophie, dated May 16th 1778; also unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 23d 1770, and Original Letters, dated from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 90; vol. iii. p. 173.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 12th 1770.

On the 8th of May he arrived at Toulon, where, contrary to the orders he had received to keep out of sight, he was recognised by three old schoolfellows, young de Forbin, de Moissac, and de Villeneuve*. He wrote to his uncle to request permission to go and see him; but the Bailli, completely under his brother's influence, hesitated.

"He seemed to me so apprehensive of displeasing you, that when he asked me where he could put up, I advised him to wait at Lambesc† till his regiment arrived. I was anxious to maintain the respect due to a parent's commands, and fearful that if I had him with me his presence might become known."

Mirabeau however persisted.

"Last night (May 14th, 1770) I was quite taken by surprise. A soldier brought me a note from M. Peter Buffière, requesting me to appoint an hour when I could see him. My answer was that he might come. I was delighted with him. My heart was much elated on seeing him. I found him ugly, but he has not a bad countenance; for behind the ravages made by the small-pox, behind features that have undergone great alteration, he has something intellectual, graceful, and noble. If he be not worse than Nero, he is sure to be

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 15th 1770.

† The same unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau.

better than Marcus Aurelius. I think I never encountered so much wit; it quite absorbed my poor brains —quite astounded me. He seems to fear you as much as he does the provost; but he swore to me that there was nothing he would not do to please you. He confessed that he had been guilty of many foolish acts, but said that he had been reduced to despair*. He told the Abbé† that he had not been properly trained when a boy, and that his last colonel, Viomênil, had led him on with mildness and reason, and made him discover a new order of things‡ in propriety of conduct. I informed him the other day, that, without wishing to play the schoolmaster over him, I would give him a summary with some reflections for his future conduct. 'PLAY THE SCHOOLMASTER OVER ME!' he replied; 'may all my preceptors employ the same means that you do. Why has this never yet been done§?' The other day, at Castagny, he said that his uncle‖ could make him do anything. It must be admitted that this uncle gave him a very kind reception, treated him like a man, and

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 15th 1770.

† The Abbé Castagny, chaplain at the castle of Mirabeau, after 1742.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

§ Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated May 27th 1770.

‖ The Bailli, who writes.

represented to him without pedantry, that both his father and his uncle, of whom the one had acquired celebrity, and the other had gained universal respect from those with whom his humble sphere and talents had made him acquainted, were solely indebted for it to their propriety of conduct, their probity and their kindness*."

"I assure you, therefore, that I found him very repentant of his past misdeeds. He appears to me to have a feeling heart; as for wit, I have already mentioned that: he would cast the very devil into the shade. I tell you once more, he is either the cleverest and ablest banterer in the universe, or he will be the best subject in Europe for either general or admiral, or minister or chancellor, or pope, or anything to which he may choose to apply himself. You were already something at twenty-one, but not half what he is. I, though nothing very great, might then have passed for something. I confess to you, without modesty or false vanity, that although, at thirty-five, during my theatrical sovereignty, I extorted from the Creoles the saying that I was no European†, I was not worthy to play to him the part which Strabo played to Democritus‡. I will

* Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

† As Governor of Guadaloupe, in 1754. The Bailli was extremely popular there.

‡ Letter of the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

repeat to you a thousand times that, if this young man does not deceive me, a thing which, on account of old prejudices, I dare not vouch for, but on which I should not mind betting a hundred to one, and, if God grant him life, I much question whether he will differ at all from the greatest of men in anything except his station*. You know that square head of Castagny's; the poor man opens his eyes and weeps for joy. For my own part, this lad cuts open my bosom. What makes me think a great deal of him is, that I find some defects in him; but my not being blind to them, is some security that I do not form a wrong judgment of him†. For three days past I have been ten hours a day in his company, and the Abbé Castagny about thirteen. I can swear to you, and so can the Abbé, that we have found in him some vivacity and fire, and not a word but what denoted honesty of heart, elevation of mind, and power of genius,—the whole, perhaps, rather exuberant. The Abbé contends that he was ready to cry when the boy said to him, in a transport, 'Alas! that it might please my father to know me! I know that he thinks I have a bad heart: let him but try me‡!'"

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd 1770.

† Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

‡ Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 26th 1770.

The whole history of the wrongs and misfortunes of Mirabeau's youth appear to us summed up in these few words, which, in the free course of an intimate correspondence, ingenuously depict the impressions made by the nephew on his uncle, whose prejudices were to be removed, whose solid reason and penetrating mind were to be satisfied, and whose soul, generous and kind, but nevertheless lofty and firm, was to be moved. Thus the unjust and fatal error is explained, which the Marquis, who was both obstinate and severe by nature, and was further instigated by dexterous insinuations, never ceased to commit by substituting a severity calculated to disgust, and excite a vehement temper, for persuasion that might have convinced, and kindness that might have softened.

But though the Marquis was warned by the observations and pressing exhortations of a brother most justly valued and beloved, did he ever appreciate his son Gabriel? Let us refer to his correspondence.

"I do not thank you for the reception you have given my son, because the right hand does not thank the left. Have a care lest your kindness of heart mislead you much faster than my letters can reach you, for you may soon learn that but a short time is requisite to get the effigy hissed, of which you wish to make a man. However, you may readily believe that all you have said about him has afforded me much pleasure.

Though a good heart may easily be deceived, it remains nevertheless certain, that whatever you are pleased with, will also give me satisfaction; and this is saying a great deal. His eager mind found itself quite at home with you, and was perfectly successful*. But be suspicious and on your guard against his gilded bill; it either shows or did show the vanity and presumption of the devil. In St. John's name, do not trust to his excuses, or he will mould you with his hand. He knows how to appear as tame as a pet Canary bird; his head is like a windmill and a firemill at the same time. His imperturbable impudence will make his fortune, when once he becomes steady; but I had rather not have a taste of it, and you will therefore not take it amiss if I proceed more cautiously. There is no necessity for his throwing off all restraint quite so soon; and, though I assume nothing from the pedantic rights of primogeniture, I never can approve of fathers and sons being hail fellow well met†."

In another place he writes—

"The kind Bailli has kept him several days, and the romance, with which this good-for-nothing fellow is perfumed from top to toe, has affected his uncle's head, which is good and strong nevertheless. 'He was

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 29th 1770.

absorbed by it:' this is his own expression. He is quite transported with the boy; the rascal has been at his clever tricks*. Were I to listen to my brother, I should give way to this usurping temper of my son's, not intentionally, but through confidence, and should be jolted by him, whilst it is my will that it should be quite the contrary †. Let him prevail with his uncle if he can, but he shall not prevail with me again so easily ‡."

This resolution was so firmly taken, that the Marquis, who thought of going to Provence, took measures beforehand that he might not meet his son.

" Let him then stay with you, if you and his superiors allow it; but be it well understood, that he is not to be there on my arrival, for I do not wish that the pleasure I shall derive from seeing you should be nothing but a parenthesis for me. Besides, the more he fears me, the less ought I to allow him to come near me, till I acquire the certainty that he is fully able to hold up his head §."

With such feelings in the Marquis, Mirabeau might have waited long enough for his father's

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 26th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated November 3rd 17 70.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 1st 1770.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd 1770.

pardon, and for an opportunity to render his high talents profitable to himself, notwithstanding his praiseworthy ambition to retrieve and to prosper. And in fact, he waited so long, that his hopes seemed destined never to be realised.

"At the request of his commander I applied for a captain's commission for him. M. de Choiseul offered me a company in the cavalry. I at once declined it, as I did not wish to plunge him into idleness, nor that he should again become a comrade in a new regiment *. He would have too high an opinion of himself. He would only have seen six months' service, and what kind of service †!"

The Marquis was, moreover, desirous of giving another direction to his son's studies.

"I have an objection to all reveries, literary or military. I wish you would repeat to him what I tell him, *omnis homo, nullus homo*, and that you would make him read the "Economics," and after that the two first years of the "Ephémérides," for I will send him the others. In them he will find the pure spirit and letter of ancient constitutions, which have always many branches, and the trunk of which is hidden in the thick underwood of subsequent laws ‡.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 12th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 14th 1770.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May

Mirabeau, however, wanted neither zeal, aptness, nor application, to pursue what he considered his military vocation.

22nd 1770. "The Ephémérides of the Citizen, or Chronicle of the National Intellect and Rational Library of Sciences," Paris, Lacombe, 1765 to 1772, 12mo., formed a compilation in which the association of economists issued their oracles. The Abbé Bandeau and the Marquis of Mirabeau were its founders, and also its principal editors until the year 1768; Dupont of Nemours continued it till 1772.

With regard to the "Ephémérides," our letters furnish us with a singular proof of the excessive haughtiness and pride, into which the Marquis of Mirabeau was led by the double impulse of party spirit and a character naturally lofty and inflexible.

"People are quite surprised at my intrepidity. I told you with what open audacity I firmly opposed all the measures already taken and avowed, to dedicate the 'Ephémérides' to the Dauphin (afterwards Louis XVI.) I have taken all the consequences on myself; and replied 'that he has only to become worthy of us, and that until then it would be a meanness.' At this very time I am going, in spite of the tremblers, to dedicate my 'Economics' to the Grand Duke of Tuscany."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 6th* 1769.

The Bailli, who was full as haughty and censorious as his brother, but against abuses, seldom against the royal authority, did not approve of this boast of the Marquis.

"You think you have related to me the history of the 'Ephémérides.' I know that you have made some allusions to it, but you have never given me a regular account: I therefore do not know what they treat of; but this I know, that I am not of your opinion, if you have had it in your power to present or to dedicate the 'Ephémérides' to the Dauphin, and that he sent to request it Do you think that a man can change his character? I believe I have never yet been considered mean, nor ever incurred the reproach of want of firmness: quite the reverse; but I think firmness should be exercised only with a view of avoiding evil.

" Trained in the prejudices of the service, burning with ambition, thirsting for fame, robust, fiery, indefati-

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Now, it is not doing evil to dedicate such a work to a man of that rank; and your refusal is rather obstinacy than firmness. What is your wish? Success for an undertaking of public utility. Such a mark of respect may accelerate it, but can never be injurious, whilst offended underlings may delay the publication. Who knows what such people may yet accomplish? Consider, moreover, that though France is pretty well despised at present, you have to do with no less a personage than *the eldest son of the church*, to which a mere nothing may restore its lustre; and that a dauphin may do more for your plan, than a hundred Grand Dukes of Tuscany.—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 18th* 1769.

We shall now merely transcribe the Marquis's reply.

" I have told you nearly all I had to say respecting the dedication of the 'Ephemerides.' The rest is only detail. The Doctor (Quesnay) had been hatching the idea for two years past. But our frank and respectable Abbé (Bandeau) sent the whole business to the devil, saying he wished to be free. I think he was right. This year, or at the end of the last, I all at once heard, through the indiscretion of some young confidant, that the thing was ready for this year, and the epistle prepared and accepted. Our wisest friends told us that it would be like entering into some cabal, and exposing ourselves to another; that it would be deceiving the provinces which had reckoned upon their freedom, and be censuring and approving indiscriminately. I adhered to my opinion that princes should become worthy of us by deeds, or at least by principles openly professed. In advice of the kind it always becomes a question who is to fasten the morrice bell; and it must be acknowledged that I but too readily answer that call. I therefore took all the consequences upon myself, and candidly told them that I should withdraw from the 'Ephemerides' the moment they assumed the arms of the court. After many debates the question was dropped. The Duke of Saint Megrin (afterwards Duke of Vauguyon, son of the Duke of Vauguyon, governor to the grandchildren of Louis XV.) came,

gable, bold, and at the same time collected, as I have proved each time I have incurred danger; having been provided by nature with the power of taking a correct view of a thing at the first glance, I was justified in considering myself peculiarly qualified for a military life. All my ideas were consequently directed to it; and though my mind, eager for every kind of knowledge, aimed at all, five years of my life were almost entirely devoted to military studies. There is not a work on war, in any language, dead or living, which I have not read. I can show extracts from three hundred authors on war—extracts on which I have reflected, which I have compared and commented upon; also some writings by myself on all branches of the profession, from the most important objects of war down to the details of fortification, artillery, and even provisions *."

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however, to give me some explanation by way of apology. I plainly saw his intention, but maintained my point, telling him that M. de Fénélon had been ruined, by people convincing the king that he was instilling into his successor principles contrary to those of his own government. He did not leave me without a reply appealing to the difference of times and persons, adding, moreover that his father, who was to derive all the advantage as regarded the nation willingly sacrificed it to the safety of the work. This elicited many compliments in return, well knowing what court sacrifices are worth. But your letter is the first thing that has made me feel some regret concerning it, on account of the value I set upon your opinion."—*Unpublished Letter of the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 30th 1769.*

* Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, tom. iii. p. 21. This inclination subsequently yielded to the refusal of his father, to

In another place he says—

"What I am more especially destined to by nature, if I am not much mistaken, is to be a soldier, for it is in battle only that I am cool, calm, and lively, without impetuosity. I then feel that I become taller*."

These persevering efforts, their natural consequences to a mind of this cast, the application, and superior intelligence which the young officer had displayed in the

stronger preoccupations, and to the sway of principles which, at an early age, took possession of his mind. He says, in a letter to Sophie—

"For a long time past my ideas on this subject have been changed: 1st. I think that men, and consequently kings, can give only what they have,—the right of doing and commanding just actions, agreeably to order, and to the immutable laws of nature. A virtuous man must, therefore, be the sole judge of the justice of the war about to take place. This philosophy which is and shall be mine, is not compatible with a uniform. 2ndly. Regular troops, and standing armies have been, are, and will be good only for the establishment and maintenance of arbitrary power. Now, I do not belong to those mercenaries who, acknowledging him alone from whom they receive their pay, never recollect that this pay is supplied by the people; who take pride only in serving a single man, whilst they ought to consider it their sole duty to defend their country, who fly to execute the orders of their *master* (an infamous word, injurious to both the king and the nation), without reflecting that they are reduced to wear a livery rather than a uniform—without knowing that the most vile, the most odious, and the most despicable of avocations is that of being the satellite of a despot, and the gaoler of their brethren. The army, therefore, does not suit me."—Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 22.

* Unpublished Letter from Mirabeau to his sister, Madame du Saillant, dated September 11th, 1780, already quoted.

campaign of Corsica, the particular regard which his strict colonel had evinced towards him, the attachment shown him by Lieutenant-colonel Villereau, who had observed him still more closely—all these things were duly appreciated by the war minister, M. de Monteynard, who, on the 25th of January 1771, wrote to the Marquis of Mirabeau, as follows:

"I have just submitted to the king the representations which have been made respecting your son, who has the rank of second lieutenant in the legion of Lorraine. His Majesty has been pleased to lend a favourable ear to the account I gave him of your son's zeal, bravery, and application; and has granted him a captain's commission. He shall be attached in that capacity to the regiment of dragoons *."

"Fortunately," thus writes the Marquis, "his commission does not oblige him to any duty †;" and, in fact, whether it was because he had some repugnance for the profession of arms, which he had himself abandoned when twenty-eight years of age ‡, with the same rank of captain, or because he had other views for his son, the Marquis made no attempt to have Gabriel sent into actual service, though the young man was

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated January 26th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 3rd 1770.

‡ March 7th 1783.

eager to distinguish himself. To the pressing instances of his brother, who had been urged on by Gabriel, the Marquis replied—

"War? let him be so kind as to tell me where the armies of haddocks and herrings are? Does he think I have money to supply him with battles like Harlequin and Scaramouch?"

Only for a moment, he thought of getting him placed upon the staff.

"I am now endeavouring to obtain, that your nephew, *the hurricane*, may accompany Count du Muy, director-general, in his circuit, which comprises Flandres, the three bishoprics, and Alsace*. He has very politely refused thirty of the most notable persons in France, and consequently me among the rest†; but I do not yet give it up."

This plan, however, did not succeed. On the other hand, another project flattered for a moment the brave and ambitious Mirabeau.

"The Baron of Viomênil," (*the rough colonel* of the legion of Lorraine, afterwards Marshal of France, who died in 1824,) "has promised me to take my son with him to Hungary, whither he is anxious to go, or in his

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 7th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated April 7th 1771.

circuit of inspection of the light troops *." The worst of it is, we are so highly esteemed, that the Emperor † will have nothing to do with Frenchmen ‡."

Mirabeau, however, was quite bent upon going upon actual service. As he despaired of being employed in the army, he had some idea of entering the navy, and his ardent spirit made him consider this branch in a great and new point of view.

" He told me, that as he was forced to wait for an indefinite time for employment in the army, he had made up his mind to enter the navy ||. He justly considers this branch the only one which of itself affords the best chance of making a man's talents available, and bringing him into notice. He is of opinion, that if any one can make his way in it, he is likely to do so more rapidly than in any other profession; and I own that he made me aware that even I, who am far from being his equal, had distinguished myself, which I was not likely to have done in a field trodden by lieutenant-generals, major-generals, colonels, majors, &c. ' For,'

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 5th 1771.

† Joseph II, that is to say, Maria-Thérèsa, his mother, who had retained the sovereign power.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 31st 1771.

|| Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 15th 1770.

said he, ' in the navy, the lieutenant of the watch is a sovereign, who is either accounted clever or the reverse on the morning after a stormy night *.' "

But the Marquis, from disgust at difficulties, and a mania for economy, persevered in his intention to divert Mirabeau from his military vocation, and " render him rural."

" I will hear of no romantic fantasies, or of voyages among the planets, or of useless amusements. It is labour and its success that constitute pleasure. Our five senses were given to us by nature to assist us in our labour: sight, feeling, smell, and taste, to distinguish objects; hearing, to communicate with each other. Pleasure, which is but a comma in the whole of this sentence, must be subservient to things of necessity. Dislike to labour is the general evil in France. Ever since the existence of urbanity and the arts, and iron-mongery, and commissions, and ribands, even the most distinguished for wisdom wish land was like stock, because they hate the trouble of repairs, improvement, and preservation. These things are, however, sufficient, and all that is necessary to occupy the time of a landholder, who should feel that he owes justice and assistance to men who are his brethren, and are not

* Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

† Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd, 1770.

so many sponges which he is at liberty to squeeze in order that he may go to the opera, and sport gilded carriages in the streets of Paris."

"Do not fail to let him read the 'Economics,' and the 'Ephémérides.' The parcel for my son contains my new work, which is intended for you. It is a 'Catechism on Economy.' I apprize him how indispensable it is for him, if he wishes to bear my name, to be thoroughly acquainted with my science, otherwise he would constantly be a rallying point for all those people overcome by the prejudices that surround them, and his ignorance would either calumniate me, or render him despicable. Advise him to apply himself to that science, and make himself master of it. You cannot conceive how much it settles the heart, and invigorates the understanding *."

"Tell your nephew, *that backbone of a wolf*, who always addresses me off hand, and never with deference, as if he were a field-marshal, and with a familiarity of style at which, from an old and over-nice habit, I cannot help feeling annoyed, that the young hereditary prince of Baden has sent me a 'Summary on Political Economy;' and that he who inherits my name, if he be not an ass, must become a minister, or be capable of occupying my place in that branch of sci-

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 1st 1770.

ence. Let him read the 'Economics,' and the 'Notice by the Editor,' which stands at the head of the 'Summary on the Elements:' it is the most elaborate work I ever wrote, though I was very ill at the time. Let him supply me with notices concerning Lower Limousin and Perigord, similar to that which he wrote on Corsica, with such additions, of course, as his subsequent improvement in the science will enable him to make.

"I again recommend to you to allay his smoke and military fire. His last letter, his navy scheme and his promises, were not at all to my liking, though I admit that there was nothing flighty nor disagreeable in the style, except the information that 'you were so kind as to accompany him in his walks.' You will see my answer to him: it is not pedantic; but it apprises him of the distance between persons of different ages *."

The science of political economy had but few charms for Mirabeau. He considered its theory narrow, false, systematic even to sophistry, pedantic, and sterile; but only ventured timidly to express some doubts to his father, who considered them so many acts of sacrilege. Away from the Marquis, Mirabeau expressed himself more openly, and his sayings were reported and exaggerated by domestic spies, by whom his father took care he should be constantly surrounded.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 4th 1770.

He nevertheless courageously undertook a tedious occupation, imposed upon him, with regard to the Mirabeau estate, on which he continued to reside with the Bailli. This noble old man had learned to appreciate Gabriel more and more, and the accounts which he gave of him, and his constant entreaties to have him recalled, if they did not excite the Marquis's anger, tended to awaken his suspicions.

" As it is probable that I shall enter my dotage at least two years sooner than you, I perceive that the great puppets of Peter Buffière have been cutting capers of longer duration than usual. There is but one thing which I did not like, namely, that he continues to say, ' people do not go the right way to work with him.' I say *continues*, for he has been saying so these fifteen years past, and nothing is more untrue. But be on your guard; a bottle which has been corked up with wire these twenty years must not be opened all at once, as the liquid would entirely run out *."

He again states elsewhere—

" We are obliged to let the young dogs go on, but the old ones are not to follow them; they stay behind, and with a single bark recal the whole pack to the right scent †. What occasion is there to let them all

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 4th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 9th 1770.

loose at the first signal? If we bring a man forward too prematurely, he comes to a market in which no one has either time or inclination to mind as it were his second edition, be it ever so well revised and corrected *."

But the Bailli persisted in praising his nephew, whom he was anxious to see restored to his brother's favour.

"Count Peter Buffière works like a galley-slave to acquire a correct knowledge of the Mirabeau estate. The rogue makes great progress in his labour. He is forming plans for a campaign against the Durance†, and writes volumes about them. He is a most fluent and ready writer; neither you nor I can come up to him. He tells me jestingly, that if I will keep him at Mirabeau, according to his ardent desire, he will be of the same service to my legs, which were formerly broken, that my spectacles are to my eyes. I am very well satisfied with him, with the exception that he has used in a week my stock of paper for eight months. His mind is quite fresh, full of vivacity and fire; but I see nothing but verdure, which promises to yield good fruit‡. I do not pretend to say that his mind is matured, but I maintain that it is very strong and powerful. I

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 7th 1770.

† The Durance, which passes through the estate of Mirabeau, continually ravages its banks by the irregular overflowings of its rapid and capricious current.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 30th 1770.

believe, for I dare not promise judgment,—I believe, *salvo jure paterno*, that the way to go to work with him is to address his reason. He soon gets into a passion, makes a noise, and sincerely repents of it afterwards. He listens to reason, and notes down all he hears and did not previously know. Besides, you have not compared notes together for some time past, for you say that you refuse to see him till you know him better. For his part, he entreats with clasped hands that his father will deign to know him *."

"I again return to Mr. Peter Buffière. I confess Poisson appeared to me a clever man. I am, however, afraid he has not left enough of what the Italians style *si fuogo* to the sallies of that lad's fiery mind, and that by restraining him he has as it were encumbered the furnace. I see in it an alarming exuberance. I am aware that you require proof, but I know likewise that our fears, like our hopes, are apt to lead us into error. I will not deny that I may be somewhat prepossessed in his favour, for I cannot well feel any thing like paternity except towards your children. This one appears to me very liable to become presumptuous, to which he is the more exposed, because must be quite impossible he should not feel some superiority of genius over nearly all of his age, and

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 1st 1770.

many who are older. He is not, like you, under the restraint of timidity, for I really think he has not any *. He is even, I believe, rather presumptuous; but we were perhaps even more so at his age, and may thank our bashfulness that it was not so much observed †."

"I will tell you that, on first seeing this boy, I thought I would let him have his own way, in order to know him better. I feel that I shall always be in time to assume a haughty tone. Whenever I found him too bombastic, I began to laugh, and corrected him coolly, as if I felt delighted whenever he was about to play the madman. I set him right without making him feel my authority, but by leading him to admit that the authority of an uncle must consist only in his superior judgment, his integrity of heart, and the purity of his morals and example. I even contrived to drop him a hint that he was upon trial; that his present conduct would decide his future welfare, whether it should be fortunate or the reverse; and that I would prove a useful and condescending friend to him, if I found that he possessed a good heart, and endeavoured to render himself worthy of you; but that I would also be the severest of his judges if he proved unworthy, and would

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 6th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated August 21st 1770.

most assuredly, in such an extreme case, wash my hands of him without emotion or anger, and hear no more of him *."

"The love which I naturally bear to my kindred, and my own self-love, have perhaps beguiled me. I have still another reason for it, which you put me in mind of, by reproaching me with having said, thirty years ago, that you inherited of our mother a bias† towards pedantry; that it made us fail to make men, and made us tire those already made; and that it behoved us to despair less in regard to young people, because in them there is hardly a vice that is not a corrupted virtue ‡. I have formed this opinion because I have everywhere found young people reposing confidence in me; and I have had to do with fellows in the navy and at Malta whom nobody could manage, and whom I tamed by clear reasoning, seasoned with some pleasantry. Youth, which perceived that equanimity and not weakness prevented my becoming angry, loved me the more for it, and felt more inclined to believe me. All this may have made me the dupe of this young man, but I do not think so. If he does but

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 6th 1770.

† Our readers are aware, that the character of the Marchioness of Mirabeau, mother of the Marquis and the Bailli, was very serious, and that her practices of religion were most austere.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 14th 1770.

acknowledge his errors, I prefer that he should always have tried to exercise his reason, than too easily have taken everything for granted. I hardly ever know worse characters than those who were so ready to acknowledge their faults whilst young; it indicates indifference, which, after all, is the only real moral evil *.

"This head of his is a mill for reflections and ideas, of which many are extremely new. You will find, as I do, that the furnace is hot, very hot; but, my dear brother, do not let us forget his age, and the saltpetre mixed up in our blood. It is expedient that he should have it in his power to become known, for as he perfectly understands reason, he listens to nothing else, and it becomes a dreadful task for him to submit to any other human restraints †."

A trifling, but somewhat curious fact, tends to corroborate this last observation. We possess a great many notes which Mirabeau made, as he was examining the estate on which he then momentarily resided. These sketches, quite rough and without order, were written in pencil, and on his knee, whilst he was in the fields. They were mostly thrown aside when he had extracted from them the substance of the calculations

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 6th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 10th 1770.

and proposals he addressed to his father. We here literally transcribe one of these notes.

"I would line the whole with willows and poplars, which would produce a good clay, very inadequate for the Durance, but quite sufficient for our purpose. As for the oaks, it is said that they are marked *, and are to be applied to the construction of vessels. Gentlemen commissioners have no doubt thought proper to say so; but as for their saying, I have also heard it said that the Mirabeaus were not over fond of commissioners, and I consider it one of their virtues †."

After this strange and characteristic *aparte*, he continues his note without any interline, or break, in these terms:—

"There are here two breaches made by the torrent, but they are not very considerable, and we must get them repaired, &c."

When we attend to what followed, there is certainly something very remarkable in this observation which Mirabeau addressed to himself, in this ingenuous sally of a mind which so soon after waged war against arbitrary power wherever he discovered it. It was therefore, as the wise Bailli continually remarked, the elastic restraint of reason that should have been imposed upon this young man, and not the hard yoke of authority, which does not condescend to explanation.

* According to the provisions of the Ordinance of 1669.

† Autograph Copy of Agricultural Notes, No. 37.

"If I might give you advice on this point I could wish that you would show him, I will not say kindness, but some relaxation of severity *."

In the same letter, the Bailli recurs to this subject.

"I would not take a single step with regard to him except it met with your approbation; for I perceive that it is quite impossible to come to a right understanding. Even something done at my suggestion incurred your displeasure, because you thought it had originated with him. Finally, my dear brother, I beg of you, for your own sake, to have the goodness, if kind inquiries are made to you about him, to appear in some measure to have mitigated the severity you have used, for very good reasons; but if he puts an end to your motives, it appears to me that you should at least diminish their effect †. I could wish, and I shall willingly yield to a better opinion, that you would receive him as a man for whom I have become bail; further, that you would relax a little in your sternness, without however committing yourself, and suffer him to make advances to you, under a conviction that you are his friend, and take great interest in him ‡."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 16th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 16th 1770.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 21st 1770.

The legion of Lorraine, which had remained at Hières, at length arrived, and Mirabeau set out to join it at the Pont Saint Esprit. The Bailli bore him in mind; and was constantly endeavouring to gather evidence that might be favourable to him, which he from time to time transmitted to the Marquis with more zeal than success.

"All my servants who have leisure, and are fond of hunting, have followed him every where, and love him. Assuredly interest had nothing to do with their regard, for it was not by such means that Mr. Peter Buffière could curry favour. I have also seen his adjutant and his major. The latter is a man of German chapters. Both are knights of Saint Louis, *ergo*, no chickens, and both have a sedate appearance and military gravity, such as I have not even had a glimpse of before since my return to France. They said but little about him, because he was present, but I most carefully observed how they behaved to each other, and I perceived very well that they loved him, and had great esteem for him. Besides, the Abbé Castagny has been eaves-dropping, and accidentally found an opportunity of speaking to some officers of his regiment. Of course he made inquiries about the boy. 'Faith! Sir,' was their reply, 'that young fellow's blood is soon up, but then he is a noble-hearted creature, with wit enough for three hundred thousand devils. He is moreover extremely brave.' When the Baron of Langier

was here he embraced him, and was much gratified with the respect paid by the lad to his grey hairs *."

"Weigh well within yourself, whether it be not advisable that you should know him. Allow me to observe, that severity may do harm. I do not know whether I have not suffered myself to be beguiled by the affection he has evinced towards me; but it appears to me that at his age I was not near so good. You are also aware, that at that age thoughtlessness is not uncommon. Here he gains the affection of all who see him †."

"I still adhere to my opinion, with due deference to yours. I flatter myself, that when I do not meddle with him, you will feel that I act thus because I think it will be all the better hereafter. All these good people constantly say to me: 'Oh, my lord, you should have followed him, as we have done, to know how good he is.' Now, in our conversations, during which I laid him under no restraint, and even relaxed, that he might behave as if he were with an equal, I fancied, nay, I am sure, that I perceived in him a strong mind, though still young, but nothing denoting perverseness of heart. I believe that though he may droop his head, in deference to your authority,

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 18th 1770.

† The same.

and be silent for the same reason, he will for all that, only give his cordial assent to what is clear to his reason. And such reason, too, at twenty-one! I think I have already told you, that he gave me an opportunity of offering a reflection to his mind, which struck him immediately; for, whenever something occupies his attention, he advances his forehead, and no longer looks at any thing. He once observed, that his ideas had undergone a great change since his eighteenth year. I made it my text to assure him, that since they had changed so much in three years, a further lapse of four years would produce a still greater difference; and I confessed that mine had changed much since my fortieth year; an age at which a man may suppose his mind formed. 'Prudence,' said I to him, playfully, 'a virtue which may not yet form the bottom of your budget, requires that both sides of a question should be weighed before you decide *.'"

"In this you must recognise my old policy. I have long been of opinion, that the way to reform young people is to lead them imperceptibly to make reflections. Men are to be reformed only by their own thoughts. Add to this, that whenever he commits an error, I make him aware of it without pointing it out to him;

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 22nd 1770.

for I yet know of no better way to form a young man than by proving to him his miscalculations *."

"I shall moreover state, that I am daily told by different people, that they have heard good accounts of him. I shall, therefore, give you my opinion, which must always be subservient to yours. If you should hear something favourable of him, I wish you would hold out to him, that, as his uncle and others have informed you of his return to good, you shall feel great pleasure at recovering a lost son, and that it will only depend upon himself to recover a father whom he can make happy †."

"The brave Peter Buffière has left a reputation of kindness at Mirabeau, which has come to my ears from below. The peasants say, that he is kind and amiable to them all ‡."

"I am still studying Peter Buffière, and can answer for his goodness of heart; but he is certainly more giddy than a man usually is at his age. His boyishness forms a singular contrast with reflections, ideas, and writings, worthy of Locke. His is altogether a mind which requires much nurture, and, as far as I can see, promises to be more than good; for

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 18th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 22nd 1770.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 27th 1770.

I always call to mind that we were once no more than twenty-one, and that I was driven from all the points of the compass, though I appeared more demure than my nephew; but the devil was no loser by it. On the whole, I think you will have reason to be satisfied. He is very tender-hearted, and the moment you show him kindness you make him happy. He really has genius, and, like all persons of genius at that age, is inclined to presumption. I who had no genius, had the same bent, and you who had genius, were not free from it; but our bashfulness screened it from notice. I think him ambitious, and it must be confessed that he is of an age to be so. No gipsy ever cared less for sun, wind, rain, or hailstones. He is not unlike barley bread, his patron—every cupboard suits him. It strikes me that he is too fond of war, and yesterday he treated me to a good scene. When he had raked together all he could think of in favour of his ambitious views, I gave him a detail of the mere moral discomforts of the profession: it proved quite a check to him, and made him lengthen his visage sadly; I could see that he was turning every thing over in his mind. I should like to keep him, because I believe he has grown fond of me, and I profit by it, inasmuch as it completes my education. I think you will really consider it time that I were a well-educated young man. Finally, I persist in thinking, that it is expedient he should be near you: your presence would make him attentive to

his little imperfections; for hitherto I have found nothing bad in him, though I made him feel quite at his ease, that I might know him better *."

Whether the representations of the Bailli at length persuaded his brother, or the Marquis, who had to go to Limousin on family business, was in want of Gabriel, the prohibition that had been imposed upon him, not to approach his father, was withdrawn.

" Dear brother, Mr. Peter Buffiière is the bearer of this; he leaves to-day. You may, perhaps, not find him over economical; but then, I have laid but little stress upon that quality, for the way to ensure success, is not to insist too strongly upon a thing. Desire makes us see double, and, generally speaking, we succeed only in those things with regard to which we feel almost indifferent.

" Besides, as your son has a great deal of sense, and even what may be termed genius, you never need feel at a loss: and, with deference be it spoken, the subject is very cold for such a burning head. You are surely not to be told that it would be as ridiculous for a father to expect that the ideas of his children should be as sound as his own, as it would be to require that they should wear his shoes. Provided the heart be in its right place, people may differ in their inclinations. He is of an industrious disposition, and I have im-

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated July 5th 1770.

pressed upon him what we both of us thought of labour, telling him repeatedly that nothing settles life so well, which is otherwise lost in idleness and pleasure; that the mind is both supported and purified, as we feel we are getting rid of the grounds and the lees; and that one of the physical proofs of the soul's immortality, was found in the intellect and ardour of men still active in old age, who but half die, and only lose what proved an incumbrance. Besides, your son fears, esteems, and loves you. But I think I have discovered his way of thinking by being his friend. I am of opinion, that without losing your gravity and parental authority, you should evince some kindness and interest towards the young man. You will not only know him better, but your precepts will penetrate more easily; for though a son may know full well that he is not to contradict his father, he may yet not feel convinced. As I have been a son, I remember how it was with me. I received my education from those alone who showed friendship towards me; and whenever my father scolded me, I held my tongue, but my secret calculations went on *."

We perceive from a passage in this very letter, that though Mirabeau very naturally gives way to the prejudices of his station, even his father's authority

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau,

over him did not then deter him from expressing bold opinions, inveighing against arbitrary power, and regretting institutions, which, even though not liberal, acted as a counterpoise to despotism.

"If you endeavour to discover his sentiments, you will find that he in some measure thinks as I do; that is to say, with due deference, in a manner diametrically opposite to what is laid down by your civil and venal writers; and, amongst others, by M. Dupont, in the 'Ephémérides,' respecting the feudal system, which was the work of Charlemagne, and the boldest of his combinations *. For your son is not only well aware, that if the times required special contributions, there was no occasion for public extortion †; but, like myself, he

* The Mirabeaus were all three of them great admirers of this monarch. The Marquis had written the following fine sentence upon him, which Mirabeau quoted in his "Treatise on Despotism," p. 118.

"Charlemagne was great among the great, and raised the age in which he lived to his own level."—*Letters on the Depravity of the Legal Order.*

Among other passages, for Mirabeau often recurs to this subject, this is what he himself states:—

"Charlemagne was the founder of the feudal order, which, prior to his time, was nothing better than a chaos of tumult and disorder. He was well acquainted with the spirit of his nation, and had a thorough knowledge of mankind. He felt that he should never be able to persuade them that a single man was at liberty to force his will upon them as law."— *Treatise on Despotism*, p. 195.

† "This feudal order, which has been so much reviled, laid it down as a constant maxim that nobody could ever be taxed otherwise than with his own consent. This principle contains the first

considers that state of society the only means that can prevent a monarchy from becoming an Oriental despotism, because like me he feels that the species of respect attached to some races, many of which cling together and form a sort of tribe, can alone raise a king to respect and keep him there. By a king, I mean a man whom the vilest portions of humanity have continually taught to consider himself omnipotent. I further believe with your son, that the respect and duties which a certain portion of the people owe to their lord, is even perceptible in regard to the king and elevates him even while it brings him under restraint—a thing which has become highly necessary since royalty, in former times more military than civil, has outstepped its ancient limits *. Charles VII, and especially his son, were fully aware of it when they abolished the feudal system, with a view of monopolising a power of which the lords had formerly their share †. But let this suffice; the subject would afford

right and the first security of freedom."—*Treatise on Despotism*, p. 204.

* "In feudal government royalty was certainly not viewed in any other light than that of a military office, and not in that of a property. No country in Europe, whatever anarchy may have prevailed in it, however despotic and ferocious the tyrants who invaded it, was ever administered in those times of ignorance and barbarity otherwise than by a legal and limited government."—*Treatise on Despotism*, p. 101.

† "Feudal anarchy was nothing but despotism distributed among many."—*Treatise on Despotism*, p. 126.

matter for a book, which I have neither power nor inclination to write. Therefore I will not say any thing more concerning that feudal system, which has been so highly censured by seditious plebeians, worse, against all kinds of authority, than either Clodius or Gracchus, except that it was only strong, and they have been pleased to style it barbarous, because France, which had the vices of strength, has now only those of weakness and cunning, and because the flock, which was formerly devoured by wolves, is now eaten up by lice. Besides, if in former times abuses arose out of this feudal system, and such was really the case, but is now no longer possible, it is nevertheless the only curb on despotism. It is worth while to hear your son speak on this matter; and I wish he would write what he utters, and here, for writers are mostly plebeians, taken from the proper occupation of their equals; they are a species of upstarts, dwelling chiefly in cities. This is more than sufficient to make us see things widely different from what they are *."

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* Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 23rd 1770. We insert a less serious development of this apology of the feudal system, but have thought it better to separate it from the text.

" A glance at the provinces, if we enter into particulars, becomes alarming, on account of the tottering state of the old constitution. To see a set of rascals armed with pens succeed men armed with steel, is curious enough. I know all that is related of former acts of violence; but besides that tales are always somewhat exaggerated,

Mirabeau left Provence on the 25th of August, 1770, and on the 21st of September arrived at Aigueperse, in Limousin, after having had two falls, one from horseback, and another from his carriage.

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it remains a question whether the deceits of the inkhorn are not more to be feared and more injurious. A few kicks or a little cudgelling do not so much hurt a poor man's family, or himself, as do six folios of writing which devour him. Moreover, writing has taken both roads; and while a man is ruined by dashes of the pen, he is dragged to prison, forced, and his person is disposed of, whilst both he and his cattle are removed from his home in a much more arbitrary manner than was ever adopted by feudal lords, whose greatest tyranny proceeded from their hatred of that quilldriving, scribbling, and literary herd, who have often revenged themselves by calumnies on the superior order of men that kept them in their native obscurity. But as one should not always weep, though I am grieved at every thing I see, I heartily laughed at the narrative of a countryman who was naturally lively and lighthearted. This funny rogue told me that he had just had dealings with a sub-delegate, who had exempted him from a portion of average labour*. I asked him whether he had been satisfied.

" 'Yes, my lord,' he replied, 'I gave him four capons and made my request. I was put off till next day, and I began to be rather alarmed about my capons. Next morning I returned and obtained my exemption; and I saw my four capons strutting about in the sub-delegate's poultry-yard, *like four officers.*'

" The simile made me laugh, and brought back to my recollection the time when it was customary, in stating that a great personage had arrived, or had done any thing, to designate him as *an officer*; now-a-days it is a *clerk*, or a president, a farmer of the public revenue, or some other individual of the same stamp!"—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 16th* 1759.

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* Labour due from the peasant to the lord.—Tr.

" Dear brother, my son alighted yesterday morning. Accidents were invented for the impatient. Beyond Roanne a post horse broke its leg under him, and as he was approaching, gave him a kick in a place which you may easily imagine. It became necessary to bleed him, and he was obliged to stop, and had then to proceed to Clermont by the coach. He was badly cured by his poultices, when he determined to travel post, and pushing on at too great a rate, had another fall, a fit of vomiting, and finally sent from Saint Léonard to me for assistance. You know that thumps are as necessary to exuberance as generous diet is to tenuity *."

" I have received him with kindness, and even with tenderness. I have made him acquainted with persons and things, warning him that I should examine him myself and by others, diminishing or increasing his trials, as I might deem it more or less prudent so to do— all with a view of ascertaining whether he can be master of himself, an indispensable preliminary, in order that we may not lose everything before we let him loose; and that if I should happen to see him in danger, or in a bad posture, I might bid him go and await maturity in a less dangerous country. I warned him likewise that it was time he should diminish those veins of his, swollen by an easy life and good living;

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 5th 1770.

that sufficient, and even too much time had already been lost, considering the triple career he was to run, if he did not wish to degenerate in the extreme *."

"From that time he has felt himself quite at ease, for he has much of our candour, vulgarly termed indiscretion. Though his grotesque appearance often assuaged my eloquence, I have seriously lectured him pretty well on everything, sometimes with mild, sometimes with severe earnestness. I perceive that it makes my man lengthen his nose, fix his eyes, or turn his head abruptly, which are signs, the one of reflection and emotion of his mental faculty, the other of surprise and of his being disarmed. I make them succeed each other, to break in the mouth of this unruly animal †."

"I am, however, on my guard, recollecting how elasticity of mind can conceal a barren soil. But after due reflection we must give him plenty of exercise, otherwise what the devil are we to do with such intellectual and sanguine exuberance? The Empress of Russia is the only woman I know for whom this man would be a proper husband ‡."

The Bailli was quite delighted to perceive, in his brother's letters, some indications of a return of kindness.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 5th 1770.

† The same.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 5th 1770.

"Continue to bestow your affection on Count *Squall*, whom you justly denominate *rudis indigestaque moles*; it is right he should find you gracious, and he really deserves it. But is he not two different individuals at the same time? When he happens to be disposed to talk reason, Cicero was comparatively but a fool to him; but then he is, on the other hand, sometimes more childish than befits his years *."

This is the first token of kindness which Mirabeau obtained from his father, and yet what a token! Six months previously, when the Bailli's repeated assurances and persevering solicitations had begun to prevail for a time over inveterate dislike and unremitting instigations, the Marquis had written thus to his brother:—

"If you continue to be, and persist in being satisfied with him, I shall enable you to make him a great present. You may obtain for him leave to assume our name †."

On the 21st of September following he writes—

"All of them (his son-in-law, the Marquis du Saillant, then Count, the Marchioness du Saillant, Mirabeau's sister, and their family) have asked me to grant him our name, and I have consented. This is telling you, in

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 18th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 29th 1770.

other words, that I am growing tame *. It is in fact possible that a correct understanding, a good heart, and a strong mind, really struggle under that rude and rough exterior; but all this must be kneaded, regulated, and macerated. We shall finally be able to *unhussar* him, when he has seen something more of the world, and convinced himself, that, reckoning from Alcibiades down to his father and uncle, it is a merit in a man of some superiority, to be able to assume any character required at the time, and to divest himself of it when there is no longer occasion for it. It may be expedient for a soldier to consider himself as belonging to a principal and almost exclusive order, not unlike the capuchin friars; but a man is but a lout if he does not know that he should drawl only in a cloister †."

No sooner had Mirabeau arrived, than he strove to clear up some difficult points.

"I show him that both business and difficulties diminish when we boldly approach them. Finally, it would be difficult to see a rogue with more talent and action. He would floor the very devil; and at the extremity of the desert world which he inhabits, he has already found two or three outlets ‡."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 8th 1770.

† Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 8th 1770.

‡ The same.

"I therefore avail myself of the aid of your nephew *the hurricane*, to whom my servant Luce, a kind of Bertholde*, jestingly observed the other day, 'Confess, Count, that a body is very unfortunate that has to carry such a head.' However expedient it may be that he should have plenty to do, and however numerous his occupations, which swallow hours as if they were lozenges, still I am astonished and frightened at the quantity of work he undertakes. He should be a rural man, that he may not be ruined; he should become a public man, that he may not be unworthy of his lineage; he should be a man of the world, considering his rank and fortune; he should be a man of the closet, on account of his taste and talents. Add to this that he requires forced and almost unremitting

* To justify the more what we have stated concerning the singular mixture of goodnature, haughtiness, and severity which distinguished the Marquis of Mirabeau's character, we give an extract from another letter in which the same servant is mentioned.

"My footman Luce, for whom Sancho would not have been a match, a fellow amusing with his nonsense, even to proverbs, by degrees makes bold to say to me at table, in full company: 'You have had quite enough, or you may still eat this.' When I asked him for a coachman the other day—'Do you know,' he replied, 'that it is *almost* as rare to find an honest man among servants as it is among masters?' He said to me, yesterday—'Sir! your eyes are sinking in your head. By dint of thinking, you will lose that faculty altogether, and your head will be turned!'"—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 23rd 1770.*

exercise, otherwise he is threatened with gravel *, and is much too young not to be overwhelmed by this complaint. Above all things, we must let this green fruit ripen †."

Circumstances were however calculated to *ripen* the young Count. Being sent for by his father, he arrived just at the death of his maternal grandmother, the Marchioness of Vassan ‡, and it was that event which brought the Marquis to Limousin. The Marchioness of Mirabeau was likewise there, animated by the expectation of a rich inheritance, soured by long exile, and carried away by the violence of her temper. Whatever were her domestic errors, which, though perhaps exaggerated, were nevertheless true, and were, we must admit, counterbalanced by those of her husband, she wanted to get possession of his fortune, and deprive him of liberty. She signified her intention to go to law

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* Seven years after, whilst incarcerated in the Donjon of Vincennes, and suffering the most excruciating pain from an attack of gravel, to which he had a natural predisposition, Mirabeau requested to have medical aid. The Marquis had formerly been well aware of his son's having this complaint, but his domestic enemies persuaded him that it was now only assumed; and the harsh father, rejecting his own recollections, allowed himself to be deceived by this cruel calumny.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 25th 1770.

‡ Anne-Theresa de Ferrière of Sauvebœuf, who died November 4th 1770, widow of Charles, Marquis of Vassan, who died suddenly August 17th 1756.

if it were necessary, and this led to that long and deplorable litigation with which the tribunals resounded during more than fifteen years, and to which we shall never refer but with extreme reserve, and only when absolutely required by our subject.

This same circumstance prepared for Mirabeau, within a short period, serious trouble, great danger, and even proved the unavoidable cause of cruel wrongs. There is really no worse position than that of a son placed between parents openly at variance *, who, blinded by their passion, display towards each other the fiercest hatred in his presence, at the risk of annihilating filial respect in the mind and heart of a youth without experience. To gain an adherent in their own child, they use their natural ascendency over a confidant both wavering and afflicted †, a judge who is instituted

* The Marquis of Mirabeau himself acknowledged the reality of this source of domestic trouble, without deducing fromit motives of indulgence towards his children.

"I have often told myself that the worst inconvenience arising from the disagreement of a father and mother, is the dispersion of their children, the state of abandonment into which they fall, their embarrassment in conciliating their duties, and the prejudices of the parents against resemblances."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Lefranc of Pompignan, dated September 5th* 1778.

† The reader may judge of it by the following passage, in a letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau.

"Your nephew has a fine beginning there in the thorns of domestic life. The first day he saw his mother he returned quite ill, from the violence he had done his feelings. Judge how he must

by force to pronounce between parties to whom he owes equal respect and equal tenderness, and can neither withdraw himself from such painful arbitration, nor discharge its duties profitably without inconvenience and danger.

Thus, however, was Mirabeau circumstanced; and we shall afterwards show that he did not succeed in surmounting its difficulties, which would have been insuperable to any other person, but were much more dangerous to a character like his, which, from injustice of every description and absurd severity, would naturally be led to league with persecuted weakness against oppressive violence. We shall but too soon come to this distressing episode. We must previously notice

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have felt when we had to take him again to meet her at the Chateau du Saillant, when he saw her once more led away by her ungovernable passion, and became a witness of her follies. This young man, who is not so much accustomed to storms as I am, who sees, or thinks he sees, the devil let loose, gives himself up for lost."—*—Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 13th* 1770.

Among a thousand written invectives, we shall extract only a single one, which we take almost at random.

"So long as the mother's eternity lasted, I put up with everything, because I always willingly resigned myself to the will of Providence. But now Madame de Vassan is dead, her daughter is become quite mad, and, instead of domestic happiness, compared to which every paradise of vanity is but as purgatory, she will never fix her residence but in marauding quarters."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 20th* 1770.

the labours of rural administration to which Mirabeau applied himself whilst in Limousin.

"A terrible dearth has come upon our unhappy country. The Count proposed that I should buy eighty or a hundred quintals of rice, and give those poor people employment. He has his orders, and commences like a man. He works with them, and dines with them at the head of their huge table, partakes of the same food, inspires them with courage, and keeps up their spirits*."

"When our business is over, and is, moreover, properly accomplished, my young spark returns, *nihil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum.* If nobody has any thing to contest with us in Provence, this is an inheritance to be laid hold of: for, thanks to the three-storied mad-houses which I have to govern, this Limousine fortune, were I not to attend to it, would be exposed to all winds, and quite lost. The rogue has stood upon the point of honour. He has but just now established a court of arbitration †, a thing I was nigh

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 18th 1770.

† This was a kind of council of arbitration, to which the inhabitants of the estate submitted their differences, and these were adjusted without delay and without costs. On this occasion the Bailli wrote to the Marquis—

"The institution of your arbitrators in Limousin is excellent. I have long since thought that every other mode of administering justice was defective, and liable to make a monarchy degenerate first into despotism, and finally into anarchy. I do not know whether it will

thinking impossible. It has shown his flexibility, ingenuity, candour, and activity. He has employed the priests, and reconciled every body. Only conceive that among the elect of the parish there are some gentlemen in very good circumstances. In all the matters of litigation which are very voluminous, and to which there is, as it were, no end, that have only been commenced this summer, there are inextricable balancing of accounts, &c. In one word, *he is the demon of impossibilities.* He was already on horseback by four in the morning, on the first of January, in these bogs and mountains, and his heart rejoiced as he received blessings. He exclaimed, 'I shall have a good year of it.' I knew very well that his was a mind which required occupation, and something more than exercise: the rogue, I assure you, does things to a good purpose*."

"Hitherto my son has acquitted himself very well at Aigueperse, besides settling the principal business for which I sent him thither. He is very badly off for food, a dispensation that must necessarily be suffered by him who wishes to become a man of merit. If this continues he will not have lost his time there†. I

please those societies which have assumed the guardianship of the state."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 29th 1770.*

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 11th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 20th 1771.

consider him at present entitled to my confidence; and as this method is most congenial with my disposition, I cautioned him accordingly. There is, therefore, nothing in my accounts of any description that now I wish to conceal from him*."

When the Marquis was about to leave Limousin, he was undecided whether he should take with him his son who had thus triumphantly stood the test of this first trial. His first intention was negative; for he wrote some months before—

"I have sworn that none of my sons should see Paris before their twenty-fifth year, on account of the disorder which it unavoidably produces, and which is the first step to the gallows*."

By and by he writes to his brother—

"I must return to Paris in November, but I must previously make up my mind as to my son's winter quarters. Now, I shall be at a loss what to do with

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated January 12th 1770. The proof of that satisfaction and confidence was published at the time, as we are apprised by Mirabeau himself (Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 190.) in the "Ephemerides of the Citizen," a journal on political economy, under the direction, as we before stated, of the Marquis of Mirabeau. The account of one of his son's operations fills pages 110 to 194, vol. iii., Paris, Lacombe, 1771. We have borrowed from the "Ephemerides" some passages which appear interesting, and inserted them in the appendix to the present volume.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd 1770.

"We thought him morose, and he was actually so— I am afraid that he is but too much inclined to take impressions from the people he may live with, and for this reason I shall keep him a great deal with you or myself. Fortunately his commission * does not subject him to any duty †."

"I have already presented him to Marshal Broglie, according to his wish. He will be presented every where at Versailles. The excellent Laqueille ‡ told me that he must be introduced to the Prince of Condé, because all the young military nobles were to be found there. *Bene sit;* but if this be the case, he will be known to every body §.

"He is now regularly launched into the world, and God knows how he acquits himself. Be assured that he will clear me from the suspicion that I wanted to make a philosopher of him, the more so, because he is as insinuating as I have been austere||."

"Your nephew has been fortunate in his visits at Versailles ¶. He is to call to-day on the Duke of Orleans,

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* Of Captain of Dragoons.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 18th 1771.

‡ The Marquis of Laqueille, a colonel in the army, and a relative, friend, and country neighbour of the family.

§ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 18th 1771.

|| The same.

¶ The sister of Louis XVI, Madame Elisabeth, then six years old, asked Mirabeau whether he had been *inoculated*. This singular

and the prince of Condé. He is to be at their dinners, their suppers, and to visit the other princes, &c. Society has changed since our time; people seek each other and congregate. He behaves properly; his demeanour is respectful, not mean—easy, but not familiar. He has been prepossessed in favour of hunting, carriages, suppers, &c. I shall let him follow that course, which is expensive at first; but then it is a fashionable occupation which wise people know how to turn to good account, and which the rogue will immediately be up to*.

"Your nephew is three days in the week at Versailles; though he does not usurp any thing, he attains every thing, and is every where well received†. But as he is a man who must be kept in constant activity, it is better he should exert himself there than here ‡. All are like relatives to him: the Guémenées, the Carignans, the Noailles, and I do not know how many more, are quite taken with him. He even astonishes the old stagers at Versailles. They think him as playful as a young pointer dog. Madame de Durfort says

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and ingenuous question caused great laughter at Court.—*Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes*, vol. ii. p. 413.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 5th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 20th 1771.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated March 9th 1771.

that he would upset the dignity of any court; but they all think he has more wit than any of them, which is certainly not very judicious on his part. It is by no means my intention that he should live there, and, like so many others, exercise the trade of drawing and purloining some substance from the king, patrolling in the dirty ways of intrigue, and skating on the ice of favour; but to attain my object, it is necessary that he should see what is going on. And besides, should I even be asked why I, who never had a mind to nestle at Versailles, permit him to go thither whilst he is still so young, my answer is, that he is made of different materials from myself, who am like a wild bird that has built its nest between four turrets; that he will there only play the fool in what people are pleased to consider good society; that so long as he was awkward I hid him, but the moment I find him presentable he only enjoys his right; that, as during five centuries people have been able to put up with the Mirabeaus, who were never made like other people, they would also have patience with this one, who I promise them shall not lower the name *."

This truth, so loudly acknowledged by the Marquis himself, ought to have engaged him to look out for opportunities of constant employment for that turbulent activity which a complete want of something to do, and

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 20th 1771.

contagious example, were likely to lead astray. We have stated, however, that he by no means cared to fix his son in the military service; the only reason he alleges for it is as follows:

" This antiquated profession, for which he has extraordinary talents, is grown as much out of fashion as tournaments*."

On the other hand, a proposal made by the Bailli, who wished him to try a diplomatical career †, was not accepted. Some months passed, of which we have but few particulars, for, as the family were staying altogether at the Castle of Bignon, the course of their epistolary correspondence is in some measure broken. Nevertheless, some letters to absent friends, such as the Duke of Nivernois, and the Countess of Rochefort, succinctly indicate the versatility of the Marquis's impressions and opinions with regard to the young Count.

Whilst the Marquis was in a state of convalescence from an illness attended with some danger, a kind of fête was given to him, conceived and directed by his son.

" Providence has played me a trick, by making me the father of a chicken, which was at first and for some time a bird of prey, but has now become a tame duck in the poultry yard; which dabbles, jabbers,

* Letter from the same to the same, dated June 7th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 18th 1770, and February 11th 1771.

quacks, and swims after flies. The animal has set up for a contriver of festivities. This very day he conducted me to high mass, amid salutes of musketry, to hear a 'Te Deum;' then we had fireworks, and illuminations. At this moment that I am writing to you, the whole parish is dining without forks, in the court-yard. Take notice, that they are not rude and poor peasants, for my parish has not its equal in the whole country. Assuredly, I find, *in petto*, the bait rather gross; but it proves a good disposition. I therefore request that you would be so kind as to take this good-natured fellow under your protection, on your return, not because I spoil him, but because he does just what he thinks proper, and takes advantage of my facility *."

But the tone of the correspondence soon takes another turn. Mirabeau returned to Paris, and his father wrote respecting him—

"At the rate your nephew, *the hurricane*, goes on, who I believe will soon have done with the court and the city, it may easily happen that by the time his head is become mature, his tail may have stuck in strips to the bush †. On the other hand, the constant stretch of mind which he occasions, and which is felt the more by

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated May 28th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 10th 1771.

being concealed, at length really becomes a nuisance. Setting aside his peculiar unruliness, and that slaughter of ideas which makes him see by flashes of lightning and pursue nothing personal to himself, were you to witness how things go on here, in what a fermentation people's minds are, and how materials have of necessity and long since been collected to bring matters to extremities every where, you would be of opinion that a person given to reflection had plenty to do to steer his own course, and that to undertake the task of moderator to a wild fellow like my son would be no sinecure *."

" He undertakes every thing, and perseveres in nothing. I have weaned him from Versailles, and thrust him into libraries, in which he passes whole days with Gebelin †, and M. de Pompignan ‡, by turns. He works and plays the bookworm, like a mad devil as he is, and after his old fashion §."

" The presence of this young man is laborious and fatiguing. He is headstrong, peremptory, and has a

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated July 7th 1771.

† Count de Gebelin, author of " The Primitive World," &c., one of the supporters of political economy.

‡ Lefranc of Pompignan, author of " Dido," " Sacred Poetry," &c. We shall show in the sequel of our narrative that Lefranc of Pompignan was among the small number of persons who had some influence over the Marquis of Mirabeau.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated May 11th 1771.

confusion of ideas that will never be cleared, because his memory has retained only sketches, and is of a piece with the rest. He sticks at nothing, and does not even exactly know his own name; and as he is never to acquire any correct notion, he will always be positive, and become intolerable, take my word for it. Nevertheless, he is clear-sighted and possessed of great talents at bottom, though I am afraid he will never grow steady whilst he lives *."

We purposely omit some details not worth mentioning. Mirabeau left Paris on the 14th of June 1771 † for Limousin, where he was entirely left to himself in the pursuit of rural labours, which prove that his father's confidence was not withdrawn. But our documents show that this seclusion was a snare artfully laid by the ingenious hatred of Madame du Pailly. Nevertheless, this laborious and difficult adjustment in which Mirabeau was engaged, again gained him praises, of which, his father was at no time very prodigal towards him. He proposed to the Marquis to clear a large tract of ground; and this project, at first listened to ‡, was ultimately rejected. He returned

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Laqueille, dated June 8th 1771.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated June 15th 1771.

‡ He proposed to farm lands in Limousin, of which he would have paid the rent to his father. We shall just state what he himself says on the subject.

to Bignon, November 24th 1771*, and met with the same obstructions, the same mistrust, the same persecutions. He speaks of the bickerings which people occasioned between him and his father, during the winter he spent at Paris, and of which strangers† gave him warning. The Marquis complains of his "eldest son, a scribbler, a spendthrift, who daily emancipates himself; whose boyhood was so monstrous, his youth so unruly, a worthy exordium of his beautiful life; whose young manhood consists in indiscretion, indecency, and clothed up garrulity, and is, moreover, so presumptuous, so turbulent, and at the same time so loose, that an attempt to save him from the dangers of this third stage of life, and from those of his own dis-

"I entered into some details respecting a proposal which you listened to, when I wrote to you about it, and recommended to my further consideration. You then refrained from giving me a decisive answer. I pressed you for one, and you gave me a positive denial." —*Original Letters from Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 298.

This is what his father first said to him.

"My son has, no doubt, apprised you of the great affair he proposed to me, and to which I believe I shall accede. In the first place, he cannot but be the better for it in every respect: it will enable him to obtain a thorough knowledge of his real calling, and accustom him to conform to it at an age of quick perception and plastic talents. It is, moreover, the only resource left in our days, and it will certainly not be through any fault of mine if this fiery fellow is not trained to it."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis du Saillant, dated August 31st* 1771.

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated November 16th 1771.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 297.

position, would amply fatigue and dishearten twenty mentors instead of one *."

Though the Marquis felt quite persuaded that there was no authority but his that could check the ardent disposition of his son, he nevertheless, instead of keeping the latter near him, sent him to Mirabeau, to endeavour to retrieve and keep in order turbulent communities, whose resistance, at first inert, but soon after hostile, disconcerted the Marquis's agents. The mission with which the young Count was charged was difficult, and, considering his character, even dangerous, as he himself states in one of his letters †. He left Paris on the 2nd of December 1771.

We shall not enter into any particulars concerning this journey, though he gives an account of it in letters now before us. He does not spare himself, whilst confessing some follies to which he subsequently alluded in a passage already published ‡; but he further relates an incident, in other respects quite simple, in so humorous a manner, that we cannot refrain from giving it in a note §, just as we might be seduced into some sprightly conversation.

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* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated November 16th 1771.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 298.

‡ The same, vol. i. p. 299.

§ "*Fracti bello satisque repulsi ductores Danaum.* Here you have, my dear uncle, a fine beginning of pure Latin, which means that I am harassed with fatigue, having slept for this week past

The moment Mirabeau arrived, he attended to the business intrusted to him, and sent for the syndics of

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scarcely more than a sentinel on duty, and having taken the precaution of sounding, with the wheels of my chaise, all the ruts between Paris and Marseilles. These ruts were, and I believe still continue to be, very deep and numerous. Further, I had my axle-tree broken between Mulseau, Romané, Chambertin, and Beaune. What a fine geographical situation, had I been addicted to drunkenness! But as I had not there the benefit of your compass, you will excuse my not telling you precisely the several points indicating the situation of the vineyards. Moreover, this accident happened to me at five in the evening, my servant having already set off before me. At first only loose snow fell, which fortunately hardened afterwards. The neighbourhood of Beaune made me think that I should find some genius in its inhabitants. I stood in need of good advice, for the devil first prompted me to swear; but I soon lost that inclination, and yielded in preference to the temptation of laughing when I saw a holy priest pass, muffled up close to the chin, his pious countenance pelted by the snow, which made him cut so odd a figure that it drove away the tempting spirit which disposed me to curse. This holy man, seeing that my chaise lay on one side, and one of its wheels at some distance, asked me whether anything had happened to me. I replied, that I myself felt no other inconvenience than the snow. 'Oh!' said he ingenuously, 'your chaise then is broken.' I requested him to tell me sincerely whether he had not before had some idea that this was the case. 'Oh!' said he, 'I almost feared as much.' I admired this person's sagacity, and begged he would accelerate his speed, if his horse would give him leave, which looked rather queer at the snow that came right against its nose, and to give notice on his arrival at Chaigny of the predicament I was in. He assured me that he would make it known to the post mistress, who was his cousin; that she was a most amiable woman, married these three years to one of the most respectable men in the place, nephew of the *procureur du roi* of a country he named to me, but which is not to be found in any of your maritime charts. As the holy man was

the communities. We here insert what was written on the subject by the reverend Abbé Castagny, of whom we have already spoken, when relating Mirabeau's stay at the castle, just after his return from his expedition to Corsica.

"I accompanied your son; he had convened these

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continuing to sound his fair cousin's praises, the devil, who had only retired to a short distance through respect for his priestly habit, tempted me to entreat him to propose me to his relative as the representative of her absent husband; but by some miracle I resisted the temptation. Finally, after he had given me a complete account of all particulars of himself, his cousin, her husband, and ever so many people more, he spurred his sagacious steed, and made it groan. I forgot to tell you that I had commenced by sending forward my postilion to Mulseau, the road to which he knew, for he told me that he was in the habit of taking his bottle there every day. This was no boast on his part, for I verily believe he was in the habit of drinking more, and I was even afraid that he might be tempted to try whether the wine had not become spoiled during his absence. Fear cures nothing:—when he left me he seemed but a little the worse for liquor, but unfortunately, when he returned, which happened pretty late, he was quite drunk. I was on the look out—several Beaunese passed; all asked if anything had happened to me. I replied to one of them, that I was trying an experiment, having been sent from Paris to see whether a chaise would go with only one wheel; that mine had come so far, but I was going to write to my employers that two deserved the preference. At this moment my man knocked his shin against the other wheel, put his hand to the bruised part, swore, as I had wished to do, and perhaps did, and then with a smile said, 'Law, sir! there is the other wheel!'—'The devil there is!' said I, coolly, 'I never perceived it before.' Another, having examined it a long while, and with a very knowing look, exclaimed, 'Faith, Sir! your axle-tree is broken.'"—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to the Bailli, dated December* 12*th* 1771.

republicans, but he only partly succeeded in bringing them together. Having assembled those who had arrived, he addressed them with a force, a kindness, and a dignity that made me shed tears; and he said such affecting things to them, as must have made them yield, if they had not been wicked in the extreme. 'Now,' said he, 'you know my father; he is renowned all over Europe for his sense of honour, his probity and his benevolence; and I should be unworthy to be his son were I to swerve from the example he has set me.' He had just made some impression on the people, when Boyer destroyed it all by his insolence, which tended to sedition, and this he would surely have excited, but for the Count's patience and calmness, which, from the knowledge I had of his character, surprised me the more, because even I, who am old and a priest, hardly felt myself equal to the task*."

We shall not enter into particulars respecting the long and useless exertions made by Mirabeau to obey his father; nor respecting the scenes in which the Procurator Boyer rendered himself conspicuous†; for they are devoid of interest, and would make us deviate from our plan. Our object is to embrace the particulars

* Unpublished Letter from the Abbé Castagny to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 2nd 1772.

† This is mentioned in the Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 300.

which delineate Mirabeau's character, and we again recognise him in the following passage:—

"I found nothing but what was right in his conduct here. He is hasty, but he has a good heart; he wants to upset everything, but a single word disarms him, and he gains everybody's affection. I have taken the liberty of advising him how to behave at Aix. This step must decide his prospects. If he is relished, his fortune is made. To arrive at this point, I tell him, that he should be moderate, speak little, let other people speak, criticise no one, and not wish to appear cleverer than others; that he should be respectful towards men, play but seldom, and make much of the Intendant, M. Albertas *, of the Archbishop, and of some others whom I have named to him. He listens to me. I hope that when you have given him your commands, he will execute them. Be persuaded that I am not led by enthusiasm to say or do more than is correct; for if I saw anything in his conduct that might be detrimental to him, I would secretly warn you of it, as in duty bound †."

We have now reached a period when a great family event was preparing.

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* One may perceive by the Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. pp. 326—334, that Mirabeau greatly neglected this advice, and that it injured him materially.

† Letter from the Abbé de Castagny, dated January 2nd 1772.

"That incrustated phiz of his, with all its graces natural and acquired, which I had sent into Provence to frighten insolent vassals, has there found means of being accepted, desired, and sought after in marriage*."

Let us here stop a moment and take a retrospective glance before we relate that event which ought to have had a happy influence over Mirabeau's fate, but which only varied its complications and misfortunes.

In the preceding narrative, we have followed a plan little calculated to gratify the author's self-love; but it characterises the biographer's object, and proves his good faith to be quite independent of personal pretensions.

Animated by the sole desire of substituting for the false portraits which have been drawn of Mirabeau, a moral description of the man, the truth of which would be incontestible, we have borrowed from his natural judges, those facts which display his character. We may even make bold to say to his contemporary and domestic adversaries, that there is not a single fact, not an inference nor a justification drawn from his historians, friends or enemies; nor from the direct or indirect defence which he has made in his confidential or public writings, published either by himself or after his death,—a defence which would,

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated May 1st 1772.

however, have brought us to the mark we candidly confess ourselves desirous of reaching, because they are always clear, animated, conclusive, demonstrative, and because they often reach the highest eloquence. Such, for instance, is the paper addressed to the Marquis of Mirabeau, published at the end of the first volume of the original edition of the Letters, dated from the Donjon of Vincennes. We possess the draught of this paper in his own handwriting, with curious alterations, explanatory notes, and a long appendix, of which we shall avail ourselves, as occasion may require. However valuable these public documents may be, we have entirely laid them aside, as, like every *ex parte* defence, they might be liable to some suspicion.

We have, therefore, done that which Mirabeau himself demanded so often, so long, and always in vain: we have submitted his youth to debateable inquiry, and the recapitulation of our account seems easy and palpable.

Sprung from a race distinguished, during five centuries, by an unruly originality of character, Mirabeau was morally and naturally endowed with faculties that far exceeded the common standard. His boyhood, his youth, and the first years of his manhood, were fiery and tempestuous, badly understood and badly directed. He was turbulent, because such is the explosion of youth, which, according to the designs of

Providence, struggles both in body and in mind, that each may arrive at maturity. He felt restive, because he was injudiciously checked. He was disorderly, because he was made to dislike the rules imposed upon him without his being allowed to understand them. He was passionate, because harsh authority excited a natural hastiness of temper which kind reasoning would have assuaged. He was ungovernable, because the use of superior force was persisted in, without even that forbearance which prudence always grants to weakness. Finally, he was affectionate, kind-hearted, obliging, generous, sincere, having the instinct, the will, and a passion for good. His errors, all considered, amount to some pranks of idle folly, some inconsiderate expenses, some love intrigues, and some garrison broils. And where is the man who has not committed petty faults, similar to those of which Mirabeau was accused with such rancorous bitterness by his father, who never excused anything, and by his biographers, because the most brilliant lustre that surrounds great men throws a light, by its penetrating reflection, into the recesses in which the errors of private life are generally concealed?

Such is our opinion, which we express with a confidence arising from our labours, for we have only endeavoured to convince others of facts we are ourselves convinced of. This same persuasion doubtless existed also in that asylum to which the instigations of

enemies cannot find their way—in the deepest recess of the Marquis of Mirabeau's conscience, since he resolved that his son should marry long prior to his having attained his twenty-third year. He had even thought of it a year before *.

" An honest man should first of all know whether his wares are sound, and that was my first duty. I have accordingly examined your nephew most minutely, and I believe that, if he remains a few years longer under your guidance, I may answer for his becoming a man of whom an adoptive family will be proud. This is all that is required. A woman of good sense and amiable temper would effect the remainder.

* " The Baron of Langier has informed me that Mademoiselle de Castellane, the one who is called Rosalie, is tall, well made, and a pretty brunette; that her father, who is styled 'the cripple,' would bestow her willingly upon your son, if agreeable to you. Mind and examine with some attention the origin of the Rouillés, to see whether they do not contain what we term 'some yellow' with regard to Malta."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 30th* 1770.

" We have, in Provence, some good alliances; little Marignane, for instance, who, should she ever have a brother, will always possess at least 600,000 francs. If I could but succeed in upsetting that unworthy 'yellow hue' concerning Malta, which I consider the most unjust exclusion, our little neighbour Peyrolle would prove another good match."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 10th* 1779.

Some of our readers may probably not be aware that the words "yellow hue" related to the fact, or to the supposition, which was not controverted, of some misalliances, which might debar certain nobles from being admitted into the order of Malta.

I flatter myself therefore that, when we propose him, people will trust to our word, and that a father who consents to take a son-in-law, not twenty-two years of age, from our blood, will not expect him to be altogether tempered *.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 30th 1770.

APPENDIX TO BOOK III.

We stated, that in giving a short account of the rural and litigious labours in Limousin, of which Mirabeau, while yet a mere youth, acquitted himself with great ability, we should produce some separate extracts from the "Ephemerides of the Citizen," relative to a court of arbitrators, established chiefly through his exertions. We insert these extracts with the more pleasure, because they offer us many attractions, and are buried in an entirely forgotten collection, which is now so scarce, that even the Royal Library has but an imperfect copy.

On the one hand, our extracts show what, sixty years ago, was the state of a province to which poverty had rendered the feudal system more intolerable than usual. On the other, they will place in a light as interesting as new, the subject of these memoirs, who, at the age of twenty-one, spent, as we have already stated, some months on the estate of Aigueperse, in Limousin, and was represented as having acted an infamous and extravagant part, by one of those inventions imagined by fantastic minds, and collected by ignorant compilers, which daily offend reason, truth, and propriety, in these our days of historical and literary saturnalia *.

* We speak here of a presumed anecdote taken from the "Révue du Midi" by the "Cabinet de Lecture," of the 19th of December, 1833, the "Voleur" of the following day, and the "Temps" of the 8th of January. It represents Mirabeau in the act of making a deliberate and cool trial of courage in "political innovations," and playing his "revolutionary" part, by rifling travellers on the highway. That the probability of the details may correspond with the

Finally, these extracts offer, by details both interesting and witty, a development of the real character of that Marquis of

main point of the narrative, the fabricator makes the robber and the robbed appear equally stupid. The robbed (a decided coward, of course) having escaped from a pistol-shot, sets out some days after, at night too, for the purpose of exposing himself to another shot, in order that he may have the satisfaction of recognising the robber. The latter prudently takes care to keep, classify, and label nine stolen purses, that he may thus furnish the public prosecutor with nine material, autograph, and undoubted proofs of his crime, and thereby not escape the wheel.

Besides, the particulars of this invention, from their absurdity, are all of a piece. The Marquis du Saillant is there made a colonel, though he never was a soldier. Mirabeau is represented at Limousin as renowned for his fatal adventures, though he was never there after his twenty-first year. The writer mentions also the pretended original author of the story, namely, M. de Calissanne, whose name he does not even know correctly, for it is spelled Gallitzane, and who will not deny it, as he is dead. However short this note may be, we should reproach ourselves for its insertion were it the mere refutation of a ridiculous story; but we have in some measure been compelled to write it by the following letter, which we here insert, to comply with the feelings of filial affection by which it was prompted.

" My dear Gabriel, you certainly owed me this note, after having imposed silence upon me, Mirabeau's favourite niece, and the grand-daughter of his father, who in his old age, would be mild only with me; the beloved daughter of that Marquis du Saillant, so unaffected and so kind, but at the same time so noble and firm, but who is made to appear like a simpleton in a melodrama, if not like a profligate of the regency.

" I no longer blame your opposition. I promise you that I will write neither to the fabricator, nor to the hawkers of this clumsy calumny; I will speak only to history, and not to journals which will live but a day. I approve of your note, though rather barren and incomplete, but on condition you add to it, 1st, that my father was, during twenty-eight years, the friend, often the defender, always the adviser, and never the mentor nor the gossip of Mirabeau; 2nd, that I, their dear Josephine, do, in the name of all my ascending relatives, in the name of that venerable father, in the name of my aunt de Cabris, who died in the arms of us both, in the name of my mother, who was also like a mother to yourself, and loved you as her son, acknowledge in you alone the right and power to contradict all the nonsense, atrocity, and scandal that has been heaped upon Mirabeau's memory; that you alone have right and authority to write his life, of which you have received all the materials, either from himself or from us in his name; and that we finally acknowledge you, and none but you.

" It is with pleasure, my dear friend, that I avail myself of this opportunity to give open and public testimony of the intimate and fraternal feelings

Mirabeau, who has already been described, and will appear still more inexorable and despotic, as the chief of a family, and yet who will be shown worthy of the title he gave himself, of "the friend of men;" speaking a language far superior to that contained in his writings, exposing, with ingenious perspicuity, his doctrines on political economy, which are here both clear and sound—fulfilling, in a word, the active duties of a practical philosopher, whom we should praise without reserve, were not a little ostentation mixed up with the admirable functions he assumed.

BUREAU DE CONCILIATION (CONCILIATION OFFICE).

L'Elephant, honteux et surpris,
Lui dit: et parmi nous que venez-vous donc faire?
Partager un brin d'herbe entre quelques fourmis.
Nous avons soin de tout. ———

LA FONTAINE.

THE artless and sublime poet from whom the above lines are taken, is here, as in so many other places, the organ of Providence and of nature, interpreting to us the Divine Author's intentions. Nothing is great or small to the immense and supreme Being. Let us fear to appear criminal and despicable in his sight, if in our littleness we give way to the haughty propensity of looking only above ourselves, striving after that which we cannot attain, neglecting those about us, looking down upon our inferiors, producing great and little things, and forgetting that nothing is great but justice, and nothing little in the order of justice, and in the means of concord and peace. So thought the author of an institution which appears to be respectable under the title of "Conciliation Office."

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which have united us ever since Mirabeau fondly held us both on his knees. Your having just finished your great and conscientious work, and fulfilled your mission, gives you a new claim to my affection and lasting gratitude.

(Signed) "JOSEPHINE SIREY,
"born du Saillant.

"*Paris, January 10th*, 1834.

"To M. Lucas Montigny, Paris."

We shall give an account of it to the public by stating the thing itself, and the circumstances that led to it. We trust it will be considered worthy of approbation; indeed, we have some reason to hope so, and should we appear mistaken in this hope, it would prove that we had yet, by our lucubrations, made but little progress in our mission.

Last year the Marquis of Mirabeau took possession of an estate of considerable extent, conferring great seigneurial rights, and situated in one of the most inaccessible provinces of the kingdom. He knew, for many years, the peculiar character of the inhabitants of that province. They are rather uncivilised, when compared with those of the other parts of the kingdom. They are enterprising, and even ferocious in their quarrels, and against those who would vex them, but in other respects well disposed. They are grateful to excess, even to generosity, and are attached to their nobles and feudal lords, from whom they will bear that which they would not endure from others. They are simple, credulous, and yet wary, but imbued with a prejudice too common among the peasantry of all nations in Europe, and which impresses them, as it were, with a character of patience to endure, arising from their belief, that to be oppressed by those who are the strongest, richest, cleverest, and most influential, is as inevitable as rain and hail. This belief, which is unfortunately not altogether unfounded, makes the poor gloomy, mistrustful, obstinate, and very little inclined to listen to reason touching their own interests; but it makes them also enthusiastically and entirely devoted to any person whom they have once found equitable, impartial, and incapable of injustice.

The tradesmen are generally active, laborious, attentive to their business, to rural commerce, and even to matters of greater importance. They are moral, united like a family, display feelings of delicacy and honour, are always ready to oblige with zeal and capacity, and are submissive, without being mean; submissive, I say, which is a social quality nearly eradicated in the kingdom now filled with rich upstarts, whence it follows that the mean and foolish pride of these same upstarts becomes the universal epidemic.

These reputable tradesmen esteem each other, and practise the most marked cordiality, together with all the virtues akin to hospitality. A little pride, a distemper produced by the creation of so

many new nobles, and fomented by the abuse of privileges and exclusions, is the ruin of those who become tainted by it; but many, and in greater number there than any where else, have the good sense to guard against it.

Finally, a nobility more pure, more numerous and poorer than in the provinces where opulence might quite absorb it, has nevertheless retained less of the national character than the other orders, because their inclination for the army, quite natural and necessary, makes them bring back an admixture of command and servitude, which is the soul of the legionary, especially at a time when it is the prevailing error to form a kind of militia, the private of which must be as complete a tool as the firelock he carries.

The union of families, frankness, liveliness, cordiality, among neighbours, courage, dignity of conduct, obliging manners and delicate attentions:—these are the virtues of this population. Great loss of time, and some ambitious ostentation, which produce want of order in their private affairs, and the defects resulting from their pecuniary embarrassments, constitute their imperfections.

To these different shades of local character, we must add the natural influences of a rigorous climate and difficult outlets for produce. This is the reason why the whole country is nothing but pasture land, timber, and chestnut trees; and that agriculture, which in this country is only an accessary to pasturage, is carried on by the inadequate and slow method now practised by the farmers.

The system of farming is here, as is well known, a kind of voluntary renunciation of all interest in the soil, on the part of the owner and the agriculturist. The owner gives his farm and as much cattle as may be required to cultivate it, to a man who merely brings his labour and a family destitute of every thing, and who in consideration of some advances to live on, and feed the cattle, engages to till the ground, and take charge of the cattle, with the understanding, that he is to share, at the harvest, the produce of the one, and at sales the increase of the other. In this state of things, the owner only thinks of making the most of his farmer. In the first place, he makes him pay all the taxes, and often purchase the seed. If there are many chestnut trees on the farm, he will require half of this spontaneous production. In one word, the owner squeezes as much out of the farmer as he can, and considering him and

his oxen as so many domestic animals, burdens them with carriage, employing them at all times for journeys, conveying or removing goods, &c. On the other hand, the farmer strives to live with the least possible labour, to lay out the most ground in pasturage or *pacages*, because the profit arising from the increase of the cattle costs him no trouble. The little he tills, is to raise provisions of scarcely any value, fit only for his own food, such as buckwheat, radishes, &c. His only enjoyments are laziness and slowness; his only hope, a good crop of chestnuts; his only voluntary occupation, begetting children.

Indeed, as such agriculturists have neither the will, nor the means of paying wages, they can be helped in their labours only by their own family, which becomes for them, if not a fortune, at any rate an absolute want. The rest of the people, poor journeymen, seldom employed, and almost always when they are, for their food alone, consist of some families who have some trifling means, and a much greater number who live on spontaneous produce, and the milk of a few goats which devour the hedges, the brambles, the enclosures, and the wood. This picture will enable the reader to form a notion of the state of degradation in which these wretched people live, and of the servility in which they are kept by men far from being inhuman, but whose prejudices, especially among the nobles, makes them consider a peasant as a being of a different nature from themselves. He is assisted, protected, and but seldom wronged; but he is despised, being reduced to subjection if he is easy and good-natured, and tormented and exasperated if he is the reverse.

The new lord had heard this people address their complaints, and submit their affairs to his mother-in-law. But she was the daughter of their old lords; she was born and had been educated among them; she understood and very nearly spoke their language. He enjoyed none of these advantages, and yet not only did he see them arrive from all quarters, loaded, at a time of dearth, with presents which they pressed upon his acceptance, declining all kind of remuneration if he did not wish to grieve them, but they also came to him with their papers, laying their private affairs before him. He saw them actually tremble, an emotion little suited to man, that excellent creature so dear to the divinity, and who, if left in full possession of his natural freedom, would not tremble were the earth itself to gape at

his feet, and call him to her depths, since the earth's bosom is the just man's resting-place, as her surface is the table of man, who is the guest of the author of all good. As he saw this, conscience, his only formidable judge, said to him:

"This was not given to thee merely to live, but life was given to thee for action, action was bestowed upon thee to do good, and thou wert endowed with volition, that thou mightest direct thy action. Daily hold out a helping hand to thy poor brethren; or if thy station call thee to other duties, choose representatives with whom I may be satisfied, and do thy duty."

This pressing conviction acting upon him, inspired him with an idea which we shall soon see him carry into execution. He charged his son, a young man twenty-one years old, heir to his estates, with this matter, more easily conceived than realised in a country where nothing of the kind had ever been seen before, and where, as every where else, there are people whom honour and conscience do not debar from deriving profit from incidental questions, quarrels, and dissensions. The young man has acquitted himself with judgment and success: and it is also God that loves us so much, who lets us become fathers.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM COUNT TO THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU.

December 20th 1770.

I HAVE seen M. Poisson *; we have conversed about all your affairs, and especially about the court of arbitration †. He approves of my plan, but wants to add a notary to your tribunal. Though I had a great aversion to introducing the slightest tinge of chicanery, I thought that the alteration he proposed might in some instances be of use, to enable those whom the arbitrators might prevail upon to settle their differences, to terminate their business in legal form. M. Poisson was of opinion, that we required gentlemen of the law, that it might involve you in expensive lawsuits, and that the

* This is the same Poisson who was formerly Mirabeau's instructor, and had then the administration of the estates in Limousin.—*Editor.*

† Viz., the weekly council of the arbitrators.—*Idem.*

intendant was first of all to be informed of it. I replied: 1. That these arbitrators were to be, if I might so call it, only unexceptionable witnesses, and were to be intimately acquainted with their parishes; that, besides, they would never be called upon to decide on any other cases than those in which Barthole and Cujacius would be of no use. 2. That your threat to have recourse to law had surely been made only to frighten obstinate cavillers. 3. That this tribunal was in reality only an assembly to adjust amicably the affairs of your parishes, and that nobody could object to you, or your confidential representative speaking to your peasants about their private concerns. Upon this it has been agreed to convene all the parish priests on Monday the 31st instant, at the chateau of A—— *. There I shall declare your intentions to them and to your officers of justice †, and engage them by fair speeches to second your views, and prevail upon their parishioners to appoint, on Monday the 1st of January next, three old men of their villages, chiefs of families, men enjoying public confidence, old inhabitants, to come on a certain day in the week and elect their arbitrators at the chateau of A———, where I shall dine with them.

The following are my reasons for the step I have taken: 1. Your officers of justice would have felt aggrieved by our arrangement, and the parish priests would have been offended that they had not been consulted, if I had not shown such deference to both. 2. How could I have managed with a mob of six thousand men, whom I do not understand, and who do not understand me? I have therefore addressed a circular to the parish priests, to inform them that you had charged me to communicate something respecting their parishes. I will provide them with a confidential person to enlighten them, under the pretence that I may be apprised of the result of their conference. I hope that with God's favour this will succeed.

NOTICE SENT TO THE PARISH PRIESTS.

The Marquis of M——, the true father of his vassals, is grieved to see that the slightest differences on his estates lead to lawsuits

* Aigueperse.—*Editor.*

† Viz., the officers of justice of the manor.—*Idem.*

which are both expensive, and destructive of the union he should like to see established in his parishes. Most of such lawsuits are mere misunderstandings, which at the outset might easily be adjusted by any honest and cool-headed person.

The Marquis of M—— thinks that the best way to inspire his vassals with the necessary confidence to submit their cases to arbitration, is to allow them to elect their own arbitrators.

The parish priests, the spiritual fathers of their flock, should co-operate, with all the zeal of paternal affection, in the kind intentions of the Marquis of M——, who relies upon their solicitude to assist him in the difficult undertaking of enlightening a great number of country people concerning their own interest, and uniting them in one common will.

He wishes, therefore, and has charged me to beg, that the parish priests will have the goodness to assemble their parishioners at the close of mass; that they will acquaint their flocks with his kind intentions, and point out to them the advantages of amicable adjustments, which will be facilitated by the joint co-operation of eight individuals of acknowledged skill and probity, fully acquainted with the business of their parish, and enjoying the confidence of its inhabitants, and who are to become arbitrators of their respective parishes only by free and voluntary election.

The object now is to have a man of good repute elected, in every parish, by a majority of votes. The Marquis of M—— further requires that the arbitrator should be the father of a family, which cannot but make him feel a greater interest in the public welfare; and he shall have reached a middle age, as he will then be better acquainted with circumstances that may influence a decision by arbitration. The parish priests are further called upon to take some interest in this measure. The Marquis of M—— relies as much on their testimony as on their advice in the different points of litigation which may be submitted to the decision of the arbitrators.

But as it is very possible, and that is all the Marquis of M—— wishes, that cases may be brought under the cognizance of this court of arbitration which, to come at a correct decision, may require a certain knowledge of the law,—M. Poisson, who is worthy of confidence in every respect, not only from his acquirements and perfect

integrity, but also on account of his having already been elected in the parish in which he resides, by reason of the many adjustments he has already effected, has consented to preside over the court of arbitrators, who, by the care of the parish priests, may be elected in every parish, and will, on every first Sunday of each month assemble at the chateau of A——, where M. Poisson will provide them with dinner in the name and as the representative of the Marquis of M——. This tribunal is further to have a notary, who will enable the parties coming to an amicable adjustment to put their arrangement into legal form immediately, so that there will be nothing wanting to render this institution as effective as could be desired.

The following, therefore, is the summary of all that the Marquis of M—— requests from the parish priests on the estates which compose his barony of ———, and the success of which I make bold to say they are bound to ensure.

To have elected in every parish, freely and voluntarily, a father of family, of a middle age, and in good repute—the election to be made at a public meeting, convened by the priest of the parish ;—to declare to the inhabitants of the parish that the eight persons elected shall assemble, and with the assistance of M. Poisson's knowledge, and the aid of a notary, hold their sessions on the first Sunday of every month for the purpose of arbitrating in the concerns of their respective parishes—with this understanding, however, and it is highly expedient that the priests should not forget to mention it to their parishioners, that the election and the submission of the several cases to arbitration are quite optional; but that when once two parties shall have recurred to arbitration, if either draw back and go to law, the Marquis of M—— will completely side with the other party.

The priests are requested never to omit reminding their parishoners, on the last Sunday and holiday of every month, that on the Sunday following they can settle all their differences at the chateau of A——.

This project is too commendable, and its execution too advantageous, to leave a doubt that the priests will promote it by all the means in their power. The Marquis of M—— flatters himself that they will do so, and he hopes that after this institution (which can-

not but succeed, as it entirely depends on the priests,) has been formed, they will use their constant endeavours to bring all disputes connected with their parishes before the tribunal held on the first Sunday in every month.

EXTRACT FROM ANOTHER LETTER FROM THE COUNT TO THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU.

January 1, 1771.

WITH regard to the court of arbitrators, all is nearly settled, with the exception of two parishes, which will not long delay electing their arbitrators, as the others have done.

The convocation of the priests took place, as I told you. They have all, except those belonging to the two parishes above alluded to, pointed out the utility of the plan. A certain lawyer in that country, whom you know, did not at all relish it, and kept me a full hour listening to his tortuous arguments. I publicly refuted them with politeness, patience, and kindness, with the desire only, as I stated, of availing myself of every person's knowledge, to ensure success. But when he could no longer extricate himself, I unaffectedly called him aside, and told him rather coldly, that it appeared strange to me he should torture his brains so much to devise obstacles against the execution of your wishes. I afterwards sent our confidential people to every parish in your barony to witness the election of the arbitrators; the rest of the burden I took on my own shoulders.

Next day I started at four in the morning for S. H. *. I arrived an hour and a half before mass. I then spoke to the priest, with whom, I confess, I was much pleased.

Just fancy an old man with grey hairs, a priest, alone doing the duty to more than six hundred communicants, and holding, as is acknowledged by his colleagues, the worst living upon earth. He has frequently had the offer of a better, but would never desert his flock.

All his parishioners invoke blessings upon his head. From them I

* Saint Hilaire de Bouneval.—*Editor.*

learnt what I now state to you. Under the most repulsive appearance, and the most dogged countenance, I discovered his openness and candour. He said to me—

" Sir, I am, from duty, the true messenger of peace, and you may inquire here whether or not I attend to that duty. As for the plan of the Marquis of M———, God grant that such institutions may be found among all men. I will tell you the truth. We have here M. de R———, who is a worthy man. It is his constant occupation to assist me in settling all differences and litigations. The whole parish confide in him as if they were his children. I dare assure you that he will at once be elected by universal consent, but as it is your wish that this election should proceed in regular form allow us to defer it till Sunday next, for half my parish are at the fair."

" I assure you I felt the more inclined to be guided by that man's almanac, because five or six stout tradesmen and the sub delegate said to me :—

" Sir, these people had formerly recourse to blows for the merest trifle, and waged a murderous and desperate war with those of S.P. *. Since this man's arrival all are at peace."

This is, I believe, in point of public men, the real touchstone. I ultimately came to the following arrangement with him. He told me the old story about the goats †, and thus it arose. The other day the keepers killed four of them, and the peasant resisted.

" Sir," said the priest, " it is a very good thing to destroy goats; they have eaten more cabbages and enclosures than I have got left; and there is besides, the decree of 1747, by the Parliament of Bourdeaux, which authorises their being destroyed. But we have here unfortunate beings who have only these goats to feed their children, and I know that some of my parishioners would rather be cut to pieces than allow their goats to be touched."

He thereupon presented a poor woman to me, who has two chil-

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* Saint Paul.—*Editor.*

† The Marquis of Mirabeau, in fixing the number of goats which the head of a family might have, wished to limit the re-production of that destructive animal.—*Editor.*

dren still in arms. She is again pregnant, has no milk, not an inch of land, and her sister suckles one of her children. I was affected at this sight. Two of her goats had likewise been killed. I asked what they were worth, and gave her twelve livres. I afterwards explained what I had often heard you say, that you would take care that those who were in great distress should be provided with milk, but that they were to have no goats. Had you seen this poor priest, in tears, throw his arms round my neck, and then approach the poor woman, nodding with his head as he shook her by the hand, unable to speak, as if from suffocation, and return to me still speechless, you also would have been deeply affected.

Another woman, in a most deplorable condition, came to tell me that a goat of hers had been killed, and the loss of it obliged her to beg. I highly disapproved of this last mode of living, and in consequence of my having been assured by the priest and the sub-delegate, that she was an honest woman, I have engaged her as a servant at the chateau, together with her son, who will take care of the cattle. These two circumstances were instantly all the talk of the village. If you had seen, like me, the eagerness with which its inhabitants, formerly so mutinous, doffed their hats; and had you beheld the pleasure that beamed from their countenances, you would have thought with me that those three hours had been well employed.

Leaving the kind priest of S. H., I proceeded to B *, where the assembled community has now elected M. L——, everybody exclaiming, "*Ché bon per lou labouradour et lou artitan*" (how kind to the labourer and the mechanic), and the peasants casting many a sarcasm at the gentlemen of the long robe, who laughed on the wrong side of their mouths. Do not forget, I beg of you, that the expenses of the notary, which will assuredly not amount to much, are not to be borne by the contracting parties, in order that nothing should bear the slightest resemblance to chicanery.

G. † has elected its arbitrator; but I do not yet know who he is.

S. B. ‡ has elected M. de L———.

S. G. § has elected M———, a honest old man, well versed in business.

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* Boisseil.—*Editor.*

† Glanges.—*Idem.*

‡ Saint Bonnet-la-Rivière.—*Idem.*

§ Saint Genieys.—*Idem.*

There now remain A. * and S. P. †, I fancy they will not be long in making their elections.

With respect to S. P., I believe that M. de ——— keeps that parish in the slavery of opposition. This may be proper; but it should not affect the rights of the direct and legal lord. This example made me think that a lord who neglects his estates, not only deserves to lose them, that is to say, that his vassals should withdraw from his land, but is also, in course of time, really placed in jeopardy.

You see, my dear father, that the matter is nearly accomplished. I have had some scruples on account of our arbitrators not being peasants, but, after some reflection, I thought this immaterial, as the elections have been free and unanimous. Why should I deprive those gentlemen of the benefit of the confidence they have inspired? Is not this confidence edifying? Will not this court of arbitration be more imposing with three chiefs, who are lords and are respected? I rely much on M. D———; his open and frank manner is analogous to the soil, and believe me, he will be able to make his boat sail.

LETTER FROM THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU TO THE ARBITRATORS.

January 20th, 1771.

Gentlemen, my dear friends, neighbours, relatives, vassals, and inhabitants.

I have charged my son to testify to you the regret I feel at not being able to embrace you on the day of your first meeting, jingle glasses with you, and tell you by word of mouth what I now commit to paper.

I assure you I should feel greater pleasure in being present in your honourable assembly than at a royal banquet, or with the same number of ladies kindly disposed; for, as regards the ladies, I should have too many of them, and as to kings, though they are the chosen of God, and are on that account very respectable, the secrets of heaven in the choice of sovereigns are nevertheless impenetrable; whereas you are chosen by the people, by those who daily

* Alviges.—*Idem.* † Saint Paul.—*Idem.*

: you, have unanimously declared you *prud' hommes:* that is to r, good men, and have placed their interests and their passions in ır hands. Can there be a more noble title? What testimony of rth can be more honourable? What society can be better than th such men who are going to make their virtue available to ınkind?

I am almost vain-glorious at having had a share in bringing you ;ether, and because I am about to participate, if not by my deed, least by my will, in the good you are preparing to establish.

When I have been able to give myself up to sweet and elevated ıughts, I have seen that in the sublime prayer which we daily ɔeat in the words of our divine legislator, we are required to ask d for "our daily bread," whilst he everywhere recommends ace. Our master has thus told us, that God is to give us bread, d that we are enjoined to give peace. If we do not therefore wish condemn ourselves to be here below no more than despicable and bellious children, it behoves us to cherish and promote peace.

Besides, how amiable is peace! how sweet her works! What fference do we find between the gratitude depicted on the countenance and abounding in the speech of a man whose grievances we ve redressed, of a woman whose child we have picked up, of a ild whose stray flock we have secured, and the aspect of a man ıo threatens, of a woman who yields to anger, of a child that rows stones and screams? Without having recourse to extremes, not the very symptoms of polished enmity, or even of coldness d gross indifference, seem a distemper, a reciprocal curse, when mpared with the joy and confidence inspired by the neighbourod and conversation of a benevolent, kind, and obliging man?

These striking marks and outward differences designate still more rcibly a real blessing or a daily curse. It is manifest, and all things oclaim it each day, that we can none of us do without each other; at, without the help of our brethren, we should be unable to obn the bread which God promises to our prayers, grants to our ɔours, gives us only day by day as life and light, whoever we may . The king himself, the protector of our lives and properties, the rd's anointed, is indebted to the hands of the labourer, the miller, e baker, and many others, for the bread he may want in the urse of the day to give him strength to command to-morrow.

Among the multitude of services by which men assist each other in life, and in the promotion of happiness in this world, some morose and dull persons acknowledge only those which they pay for; they have no other notion of payment than the one in money, and would therefore wish for all the money the world contains that they might have all men's services. But we, who have had the happiness of having been born, and of having lived in the country, have neither our hearts nor our views so dried up and straitened. We see that the goodness of heaven loads us with benefits which we are able to repay by acts of gratitude alone; that frost prepares our fields, snow enriches their soil, rain irrigates them, heat re-animates them, and calm weather brings maturity. What wealth could enable us to purchase all these blessings—to indemnify their abundant source? It is from this pressing question that the false rich man turns his brutified ear; but we, with a sacred pride, based on the privilege of being daily witnesses of that visible circle of benefits and remunerations, dare listen to the voice of heaven, and we hear it proclaim:—

"I bring you peace, I give you peace, I recommend peace unto you."

Do you doubt, my honourable friends, that he who styled himself the "God of armies," because man's malice had rendered armies necessary to establish and maintain peace upon earth, does not style himself with greater pleasure the "God of arbitrators," and that he will not cast a merciful look, and shower a blessing upon ten men who devote themselves to maintain peace and concord in a whole district? It is the distinct and reiterated order of heaven which you are going to execute. Happy is the high-minded man, at each instant, obliged to acknowledge a master, who learns distinctly what kind of service that master requires at his hands! Happy is the tender-hearted man, daily loaded with benefits by an invisible hand, who distinguishes, notwithstanding the veil that surrounds it, what kind of homage may be acceptable to his benefactor!

But it is not for laborious men to tarry long in the researches and feelings of the higher causes. Heaven requires thanksgivings, love of order, resignation to acts of justice, and labour which forms a part of them according to law. It shows us affectionate beings, our brethren, our kinsmen, and our necessary friends, ready to collect in

kind the tribute we owe to our Creator, and to present it to Him with their own hands. They prove to us that man is not to be bought, but that he becomes attached, offers himself, yields, and never withdraws from the confidence and attraction produced by benefits.

Those rustic and interesting men whom you are going to dismiss contented and relieved, have inspired me with the happy thought which now calls you together. When I saw them come to me, a stranger, but one on whom they had a claim, to bring me the first fruits of their harvest, and submit their affairs to my decision, whilst I wanted an interpreter to understand their language—when I saw them tremble, and in whose presence? (God is my witness that I never looked upon a poor labourer in any other light than that of an equal, and even of a master, if on a sudden it pleased Providence to reverse our lots,)—I said to myself, as if I were addressing another:

"The real want of these good people is quite clear; they ask for neither money, nor food, nor protection, though they are truly in want of them all; but they are aware that thou dost not owe them any. They ask of thee to throw light upon their difficulties, and put an end to their disputes. Dost thou not owe them this?" "Undoubtedly: but I have appointed officers of justice, and thus my duty has been fulfilled."—"But dost thou not see that justice which pronounces, and arbitration which conciliates, are two different things; that thy officers can only judge, and are necessarily bound by a general rule requiring set forms, such forms demanding agents; that all the men cannot devote themselves to their profession unless they have a remuneration the amount of which creates costs of suit; that all costs are burthensome and often ruinous to these poor people; that besides, when the officers of justice have judged, there are distant superior tribunals, beyond the reach of the poor man confined to his labour, and that consequently even the obstinate, when he finally loses his suit, is always sure to ruin his opponent:—that there is, in one word, no justice here below for men who have not the means to pay for it. Hence wicked men spring up; for the feeble never revolt unless they are driven to extremities. Stay then to fulfil the hope of thy children, or resign a title which brings thee their confidence, to others who are able duly to answer their expectations."

I could do neither, gentlemen, and it was this anxiety of conscience that made me have recourse to you. I have met with more success than I anticipated. I have had the satisfaction of seeing my son further this good work. A meritorious clergy has deigned to listen to his voice and second his exertions. They assembled their parishioners; the people heard that they were called upon to elect their arbitrators, they applauded, and you, gentlemen, were unanimously elected in your respective parishes. I have lived long enough for circumstances to have made me known in many places; but I should be without a country if such trials were required before a man was acknowledged a citizen.

You, my honourable friends, will help me to become so in the province in which you dwell. Your equity, your kindness, and your knowledge will bear good fruit; the example of the first barony in this province will encourage similar institutions in other provinces which may have the same wants. The humble share I have had in this great good will be remembered; also that I conceived the first idea of it; that my son made the first proposal; that he had the happiness to be present at the first meeting; that a man *, born, like myself, in a different country, but endowed with a candour, equity, and dignity of soul which render him worthy of being your associate, was so obliging as to represent me there; and your grandchildren on coming to take their seats in the same hall which you are now going to honour with your presence, will there meet little shepherds who, having traced a head on the green bark of a chestnut branch, will plant it in the grass and in the shade, exclaiming, "This is VICTOR † who invented the arbitrators, held in such great repute."

Friends, neighbours, and masters, my heart experiences a sweet joy in thinking of all the good you are going to effect, and in throwing away all care about the evil you are going to prevent. Conciliate, arbitrate, and even judge. Your judgments enslave no one, you are the organs of truth and circumstances, and you take nothing from the law. It and its tribunals remain for those who may not be satisfied with your decisions. I charge you, however,

* Poisson.—*Editor.*

† The Marquis of Mirabeau's Christian name.—*Editor.*

to make known that if an obstinate and litigious man, deemed so by yourselves, should think to gain advantage over his opponent, tire him out and exhaust his means, by carrying the cause from one tribunal to another, I shall in such case consider it incumbent upon me to assist the oppressed, and I hereby direct that all the costs of his defence be defrayed from my own funds.

But I hope that such a case, which would at any rate be very rare, especially in a country the inhabitants of which are more violent than unreasonable, much inclined to confidence, and very submissive to the local authorities, will not occur. Moreover, I shall be the first to testify my regard for you and to invoke your authority in my own affairs.

I am, &c.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY THE COUNT TO THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU.

February 4th, 1771.

Let us return to our meeting of arbitrators. All passed off with decorum and even dignity. M. Poisson read a pompous speech, and I perceived that after your excellent letter and the several speeches, I could have but little to say, as you will see at the end of M. Poisson's speech, a copy of which I enclose. There were six arbitrators present, and I cannot give you a better and more simple account of the proceedings than by sending you the resolutions. I will further relate a trifling anecdote. In reading your letter, when I came to the words "and your grandchildren coming to take their seats," &c., I read it with all the simplicity and nobleness that I could give to the expression of an idea so pleasing and paternal, and I could distinctly perceive a change of countenance in each of the arbitrators. Tears started into their eyes. I confess that I felt a kind of suffocation, and was obliged to draw my breath. It really does the L——s * much honour.

* Limousins.—*Editor.*

EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTERS OF THE MEETING OF THE TRIBUNAL OF CONCILIATION, ESTABLISHED FEBRUARY 1ST 1771, UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU, AND HELD BY THE ARBITRATORS OF HIS BARONY OF P. B. *.

On this day, February 3rd 1771, after the mass of the Holy Ghost, celebrated at the Chateau d'A——, were installed, under the authority of the Marquis of Mirabeau, in presence of the Count of Mirabeau, his son, at the tribunal of conciliation, M.M. P——, L——, M——, T——, P——, and F——, &c. The session of the tribunal was opened by the Count of Mirabeau reading a letter written by his father to the gentlemen composing the aforesaid tribunal, together with his, the Count's, reply. The tribunal then came to the following resolutions:—

I. "That the letters, speech, and reply aforesaid be registered."

II. "That an answer be written to the Marquis of Mirabeau in the name of the deputies and inhabitants present at the opening of the said tribunal, and that such answer do contain thanks, &c."

III. "That, considering the impossibility of settling anything at present, the names of those who will submit to arbitration shall be taken down, and the tribunal put in possession of the papers relating to their cases, which shall for that purpose be collected and placed in the hands of the arbitrator of their respective parishes, who will bring the parties to a compromise if possible, and report the same at the next meeting."

After this the peasants were admitted. The following is the result of part of the cases heard:

In the case of Anthony F——, of the village of ——, in the parish of ——, against Leonard C——, of the burgh of ——.

This case had reference to a hire of cattle for half the profit, concerning which an action had been brought in the jurisdiction of ——. The parties agreed to reduce the sum in dispute to thirty livres, including principal, interest, and costs. The plaintiff acknowledged that he had received eight livres from the defendant, who promised to pay the aforesaid plaintiff seven livres the next

* Peter Buffière.—*Editor.*

day, and the fifteen remaining livres next Ash Wednesday. The Sieur M——, notary to the tribunal, is charged to report, at the next meeting, the consummation of this agreement.

In the case of Catherine G——, wife of Francis D——, of the village of ——, in the parish of ——.

Against Francis G——, her father.

This case refers to an action for the payment of a dowry which complainant alleges to be due to her by her father, it being derived from her mother's estate. The tribunal has referred the parties to the Sieur L——, to hear and bring them to an understanding, if possible, and to report the issue at the next meeting.

In the case of Leonard ——, of the parish of ——, against Thomas G——, of the same parish.

This case relates to an inheritance of land belonging to G———, and of which Leonard ——— has taken unlawful possession without a title, and discharged many debts for which that land was mortgaged. The parties have agreed to abide by the decision of Messrs. P—— and M——, father and son, whom the tribunal has appointed to be arbitrators in this case.

In the case of Gaspard C———, of the parish of ———, plaintiff, for indemnity claimed from the proprietors of the mines of ———, in consequence of the damage occasioned by their wagons going across one of his fields. The plaintiff having expressed his willingness to abide by what the tribunal might be pleased to determine, the said tribunal appointed the Sieur de L——— arbitrator, and upon his report, assigned for every year six livres as an indemnity; which has been accepted by the plaintiff.

You may conceive, my dear father, from this sketch, how useful and permanent your tribunal may become. The peasants were so numerous, that we were unable to attend to more than a quarter of the cases they brought.

SPEECH MADE ON THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1771, AT THE OPENING OF THE TRIBUNAL OF CONCILIATION AT A——, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE COUNT OF ——.

SIR,

Whilst the Marchioness of Vassan was still alive, and your father had yet nothing but the mere administration, under a burthensome

title, of the barony of P. B., he already, by memorable and purely gratuitous services, anticipated the wants of the inhabitants. On the first intelligence of the calamity which has now afflicted this province for the space of two years, he wrote to me these words, worthy of being engraven on marble, as a perpetual lesson to landlords:

"I understand that calamity comes over our poor people in a manner which calls me to my duty. The times are unfavourable, and Providence humbles and afflicts me, by imposing it upon me, after so hard a year to me as the last, on account of the heavy payments I have made. But I have still some plate, and these poor people have nothing but empty bowls of wood. I have given orders that work shall be given to such as can obtain none. It is out of my power, however, to bestow more than 6,000 livres upon this charity, from the present time until the labours of the field commence."

In a second letter he states to me:

"I will have no taxes: I want only a hundred pistoles as my share. Besides, if there be any person in poverty, any valetudinarian, any invalid, any worn out by age, or any other sufferer who has not been relieved, you know my heart, and I place it at the discretion of yours."

Every one knows how soon the execution followed this promise. Labour was publicly announced, distributed and paid for, and your father's inexhaustible charity would moreover furnish his share of provisions to the poor of each of the eight parishes in this barony.

The number of such acts of benevolence, and his always combining the practice of all the social virtues with the precepts which he has laid down in his writings, justify the title which the Marquis of M——— has given himself these twenty years past, and he has so well earned:—a title, Sir, the glory of which I have seen you, from the tenderest age, jealous of sharing and which even then you preferred to all those which decorate your illustrious house. Your desire must be satisfied: the gate is unclosed to the impatient wish of doing good, which you have ever manifested; and from the end of the career, constantly pursued by your father with so much honour, he calls upon you to follow his footsteps, as he is desirous that the tribunal of Conciliation should be

this day solemnly opened through your mediation, and under your auspices. This is a new proof of his paternal tenderness for his vassals, and the mere proposal of this institution has generally delighted all to whom it has been communicated. Contemplate your work, Sir! Behold all the parishes of this jurisdiction assembled, at your call, in the mansion of your ancestors. Behold these venerable fathers of families, these wise and peaceful men, invested with the confidence of their community and honouring its choice, elected to form part of this areopagus. See this assembly, offering you their gratuitous labour and services, either to maintain, as much as possible, among their fellow creatures, the fraternal sentiments of union and concord, or to recall, by the voice of mediation, those that were about to depart from them!

What advantages may we not expect to derive from such an association? For rapacity, subversive of every social tie, exercises no less its ravages in the country than in towns. It there drags, as everywhere else, in its train, oppression, injustice, altercation among neighbours, quarrels in families, jealousies, murderous acts of revenge, contempt for and abuse of the law, and ruinous law-suits. By preventing and destroying the source of so much disorder and misery, either by the ascendency of example, or by solid reasoning, or by the persuasive eloquence of the kindest exhortations, the only means the tribunal can think of employing, is not this institution calculated to impart a new life to agriculture, by restoring to labour either a time which is valuable, on which success often depends, but which is lost in the pursuit of law proceedings; or money required for advances which it will return with usury, and which would unfortunately be wholly absorbed without a remedy in the costs of law-suits? Will it not restore the harmony of society, and cause its regeneration in a country, confined within narrow limits, and reduced to a small number of individuals, who, from the vast objects they have to bring into action, are the more i want of the full amount of their strength, and of accordance in their fraternal exertions? In fine, will it not reduce to practice, in its real sense, the precept of charity, and in some respect participate in the ministry of angels?

To execute all this, as far as possible, in compliance with the

wishes of the Marquis of M———, under his authority, and with the aid of his protection, is what is aimed at by the tribunal of Conciliation, which you have just now installed.

THE COUNT OF M———'S REPLY.

GENTLEMEN,

I have nothing to add to what has just been said by M. Poisson, or to my father's letter which I have read to you, except to express the lively sense I entertain of the honour and pleasure I derive from being treated by you as a fellow countryman and brother, and from being in an humble degree instrumental to the execution of my father's good intentions. You have some knowledge of his heart, gentlemen, you understand it;—this is all my being his son will allow me to express.

M. Poisson has briefly described the object of your mission, and the spirit that should preside over your deliberations. Let us consider together what may be the readiest form and order for your labours and their results.

Worthy intentions should be followed up by wise measures, which it would ill become me to suggest.

There are, however, two principal points on which M. Poisson and I are agreed, and which, I am inclined to believe, ought to form the basis of your deliberations.

Your arbitration is purely voluntary. Whoever hears but one side hears nothing. Therefore the arbitrators are not to decide in any case, but with the consent and in the presence of both parties.

The small number of your meetings leaves you but a very short and very valuable time, which should not be neglected; it might be entirely lost in reading papers and in debates. It appears expedient, for the sake of despatch, that every case submitted to the arbitration of the tribunal of Conciliation should in the first instance be referred to the arbitrator of the parish to which it belongs, in order that he may be able to draw up his report in a concise and clear manner. The arbitrators will then be able to pass

judgment by a majority of votes, at the following meeting. Happy, thrice happy will it be, if each arbitrator can, in the discussion of each case, place it in its true light, and succeed in bringing it to a close before he reports it here! How worthy would he be of his colleagues, and how highly would his colleagues be respected in him!

M. POISSON'S LETTER TO THE MARQUIS OF M———.

February 7th, 1771.

MY DEAR MASTER,

Your son has, no doubt, informed you that on Sunday the 3rd instant, at the close of the mass of the Holy Ghost, celebrated at the chapel of the chateau of A——, by the Abbe M———, the tribunal of conciliation was installed, composed of—

The Count of ———

P.*, president, as Scagnarelle was a physician.

De L———, ex-lieutenant of the Seneschal of ———, and arbitrator of B———.

Jean Baptiste F———, arbitrator of G.

Joseph M———, mechanic, arbitrator of S. G.

Barthelemi, J———, notary, arbitrator of S. P.

Leonard P———, shopkeeper, arbitrator of A.

The members were introduced by your son, walking at the head of the arbitrators, escorted by the keepers in their state liveries, into the great hall, and placed round a large table covered with a green cloth; where, when all had taken their seats, having saluted each other right and left, according to custom, your son opened the session, by reading your letter to the arbitrators. You may well conceive, my dear master, that this letter was unanimously applauded by the new tribunal, whom it really honoured and flattered, and by the numerous assemblage of peasants of all your parishes, whom curiosity or business had brought to the chateau, and who, I believe, took every thing in good earnest.

When the letter had been read, it was resolved — 1, That the letter

* M. Poisson.—*Editor.*

should be registered in full in the first page of the journal of the meeting, as a valuable testimony of the glory of the tribunal and its founder; 2, That very humble thanks should be returned to the Marquis, in the name of the areopagus and of all present, for the obliging things he had been so kind as to write to the arbitrators, who will always consider it their duty to please him, and who promise him to use all their endeavours to justify the good opinion he entertains of their zeal and talents, and for his good and fatherly intentions towards his vassals; 3, That the president should be entrusted with the double commission of reporting every thing to the Marquis, and registering their proceedings; to which the president aforesaid replied, "AMEN! AMEN!"

The said president then made a short speech half a quarter of an hour in length, merely to prove that twice two make four,—that is to say, that a compromise is better than a law-suit. He regulated the limits of jurisdiction and its power by the ascendency of example, the authority of solid reasoning, and the persuasive eloquence of fraternal exhortations. All this was said to appease the alarms of the lieutenant-general and the procureur du roi, already bewildered, as we have been assured, by the measures which your son had on a former occasion announced you would take against the obstinate. This threat seemed to indicate a kind of co-action; as if it were not proper to assist the feeble with money and advice against the powerful, who would take advantage of his want of these things to oppress him.

The Count replied in a few words to the speech of S. P., and it was likewise resolved that the two speeches should also be registered at the end of the Marquis's letter. This done, the tribunal left their seats, and repaired to the council-chamber to deliberate in private on the affairs that should be brought before them, a necessary precaution to prevent confusion and noise.

I was near forgetting to tell you that the priests of A——— and G———, besides C———, were present at the meeting, and were requested to take their seats among the arbitrators, to which they acceded.

As your son has still the decisions of the tribunal, I am unable, my dear master, to give you an account of the different judgments which have been pronounced. I only recollect that they got throug

seven or eight cases, and that I set the example, by submitting to their decision, on the report of L———, the indemnity claimed from the gentlemen concerned in the mines *, by Gaspard C———, in consequence of the damage the wagons annually occasion, and which was valued at six livres a-year.

I have the honour to observe to you, that C———, who has taken a liking to the institution, has been of very great use to us: 1, By his knowledge of legal forms and usages; 2, By a certain tact necessary to lead the peasantry to conciliation; so that I consider it highly essential for the maintenance of the new tribunal, and for its utility, that C——— should not only become one of us, but that he should in some measure be obliged to be present at every meeting.

You might, without inconvenience, let him preside; and let me preserve, if you think fit, the title of honorary chairman. This would diminish neither my zeal nor my promptitude, and every thing would most assuredly go on better.

The meeting closed at half-past one, and was succeeded by a very good dinner. Permission was requested to drink to the health of the founder of the tribunal, never more truly entitled to the name of conciliatory than at the conclusion of the meal. The members embraced each other like so many brothers, without distinction, right and left, all interchanging the warmest protestations.

Some further cases were gone into after dinner, but were prudently referred to the arbitrators of the respective parishes, to investigate them, and report thereon at the first meeting of the tribunal. *Et factum est vespere et mane dies unus*, and every one returned home, *gaudens a conspectu concilii.*

This, my dear master, is in sum the result of the first meeting, with which I think every one was satisfied. If the institution is kept up, it may be of the greatest service; but if we wish to avoid committing injustice, it should be under the direction of a gentleman of the law, well acquainted with the local bye-laws: for two wrong decisions would be the ruin of the tribunal, which, as you

* The mines of Glanges, worked under the direction of Poisson, on behalf of the Marquis of Mirabeau and a company of shareholders.—*Editor.*

will easily conceive, is watched closely by the other jurisdictions, likely to lose by it some of their customers.

I cannot refrain from expressing to you, that the greatest praise is due to your son for the manner in which he conducted every thing.

REPLY OF THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU TO M. POISSON.

February 16*th* 771.

MR. PRESIDENT, IN SPITE OF HIMSELF,

My son had anticipated your letter by giving me an account of the first meeting on the morning after it took place; but my chancellor's letter was not the less welcome to me. Whatever he may say, I cannot see what he and Scagnarelle can have in common, except his aptitude in quoting Latin to those who do not understand it. With this exception, the more he persists in the *nolo episcopari*, the more does his modesty entitle him to hold the high office for which Providence seems from all eternity to have designed him. And if he were to hide himself in the middle of a forest, we would go, all the people, in one body, to look for him, and if he still persisted, we should proceed to consecrate him.

I am delighted with the whole of your account and your dignities, derived from the natural dignity of man, which is to contribute to the advantage of his fellow creatures, and your resolutions, and your embraces, and your tears; and this account animates me so much, that I have shed some of those *sweet tears* which you know I long since praised. I am very glad that my letter took effect. I return you my thanks for your speech, in which your friendship for me peeped forth so strongly. I am likewise much pleased with the letter from my son, and the more so because we did not formerly fear that he would be sparing in words.

There are still two arbitrators wanting to my satisfaction, and they are the more necessary as being the two most notable. I know that M. D——— had an available excuse in a very bad and very evident face-ache, which prevented him from going out; but as for the journey of my neighbour and friend L———, I am afraid

of the weather-cock dignity—not his, for his unanimous election and his morals prove him to be a good and excellent man without foolish vanity, but that of some neighbour of his, who may have led him to find an excuse, and made him believe that it is beneath the dignity of a man like him to take a seat among his inferiors.

Alas! how long shall we think that we should defer all thoughts of equality, until we find ourselves placed in the burial-ground? How long shall we remain ignorant of the truth, that every natural superiority, of birth, riches, dignity, &c. requires an equivalent superiority of morals, else it only tends to degrade us; that in all cases, it is pride that lowers, and brotherly kindness that raises us to an equality, which many of the most illustrious races have never attained? All we can do against this prejudice, still more repugnant in the country, where nothing belonging to the nobles is contested, is to encourage our inferiors, and set a good example to our equals. I am going to write to L———: I will not suppose that he expected it, but I will anticipate him. I shall propose to him to have the meeting at his house. I am not afraid of being unable to bring him to a point; but to persuade is quite another matter, and that is a thing which I entrust to your delicacy and wisdom, for if we are once sure of him, all will go on well.

You perceive that there is no chance under these circumstances of relieving you from the burthen of the chair. The kind Madame C———, with whom you are acquainted, told me that a woman, under her care, far gone in pregnancy, said in the impatience, caused by protracted labour: "I am, however, to be brought to bed to-day." Being questioned whence she derived that certainty,

"My dear," was the reply, "if you had partaken of bread only once in the course of a year, you would be sure to recollect the day."

Your experience would be at a fault, like that of the aforesaid lady with regard to her delivery, if you expected to perfect the institution at one sitting. You have, besides, all the qualifications requisite for the office of president. 1st, You speak the French used on the other side the Loire, and this renders us of great consequence in our country: it is as imposing as a wig in the villages.

2nd, You are thought to be an honest man, and this is not to be found "under the foot of a mule," as good people say. 3rd, A good presence and rotundity, a great step towards obtaining respect. 4th, La Ch——'s * having fallen *in partibus infidelium*, does not prevent your being as good as the most delicate 5th, Wisdom, equity, kindness, and dexterity are articles which I shall take for granted in speaking of you, besides your knowledge, because, since you have forgotten something of your *Barthole*, you are inclined to think that you are expelled from vulgar things, which I infer from your fear of coming to wrong decisions, and your conviction that you are closely watched by those belonging to the jurisdiction. Now, in my opinion you need fear nothing of the kind. This is by no means a tribunal which can be assimilated to any of which we have a notion. Though there are undoubtedly many of the positive laws which contradict right and nature, we should nevertheless be acquainted with them, and likewise with usages, customs, and forms of practice, in order to decide correctly. This is requisite, I admit; but here to make persons agree and to engage them to compromise, either verbally or in presence of a notary, requires good sense, uprightness of heart, a general notion of the law of inheritance, and further a clear-headed notary who understands his business. As each of the arbitrators will have to report on the affairs of his parish, he will examine each case, make the necessary researches, and take the same counsel of himself which he would have done had he to bring about the conciliation by his own means. He will thoroughly prepare the case, the meeting will aid or decide, write, drink, embrace each other, and God will help you, because he rejoices when people decide pending questions that involve men and property, when they perform acts of peace, when they heartily drink together, and especially when they embrace each other; and it appears to me that he made our arms solely for the latter purpose.

Oh! my dear master, do not give way to these discouragements. Allow me to bring your virtues into action, your faculties into evidence, and your talents into practice; permit me to make known to my poor people who are and were their friends. C——, as far as

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* Poisson's son, La Chabeaussière, who was said to have become an actor: but this supposition was afterwards contradicted.—*Editor.*

he has their confidence, will do; but if he were forced he would certainly mar the whole thing by the sin of omission, which is his favourite occupation. Do arbitrate, my dear friend; you will always judge better than a priest of Th——, formerly a captain of dragoons, who, with a cudgel in his hand, forced his parishioners either to come to an understanding or run away. They derived so much advantage from this system, that, ever since, they have compelled all his successors to become their only judges, whether they had a mind to do so or not.

With respect to the banquet, do in future as you did at first. As they embraced each other, that is all that is necessary; and it is not of this act that it will be said, "May death come of it!" I wish also to take the notary's costs upon myself, and that those good people may love me as you do. All will then be well. Whether the officers of the jurisdiction laugh or cry, Satan will not cry the less for it, and angels will laugh in heaven or in our soul, which is some day to be a celestial abode, in order that it may become what its author intended it should be.

Order the keepers to be in attendance on the days on which the tribunal is held. Punctuality should be observed at the first session, to be held on the 3rd of March. I shall be glad to hear that C—— was present. Whatever be the state of the weather, I recommend this period to your attention, for in the month of April there will be play.

I am, &c.

LETTER FROM THE MARQUIS OF —— TO M. DE L——.

February 17th 1771.

I hope, my dear neighbour, that my son has acquitted himself of the charge I gave him, to thank you in my name for the kindness you have shown in complying with the wishes of the parish of St. B——, by becoming their arbitrator. The poor people could not have done anything better for you. They would have made you a bishop, or the saint of their parish, had they been able, but to submit to you their interests and concerns appeared to them of greater importance and more decisive. The more you are their superior in

fortune, rank, and birth the more are you honoured by their choice, and the more agreeable must it prove to your feelings. I ought to feel jealous of you; for, be not offended at it, my chateau is in their parish as well as yours, and I am, besides, fifteen years older than you. But I consoled myself by saying—

" My neighbour appears stronger than I, and with country people vigour is a portion of wisdom: it inspires them with confidence and inclines them to subordination; and in reality force is the worthy pedestal of equity."

Be this as it may, they have elected you, my worthy neighbour, and I am very glad to see you thus justify the natural inclination your presence had inspired me, and which the fairness of your proceedings has so well confirmed.

I know you, my dear neighbour, for I have had some dealings with you, but I was not aware that all these people knew you as well, or, at least, that during your lifetime it would be said of you unanimously, at the close of mass, and at the very first word, that you were the most respectable and beloved of the whole parish, especially by the poor. I well know that in four provinces men of our rank universally say " M. de L—— is a worthy gentleman," and this is but too often applied to strong sportsmen, like Nimrod, who cane all that come near them, and are held up as bugbears to children. Every one, it is true, has his own notions: mine have been in vogue like those of others, and I solemnly declare to you, that I should be more flattered with such testimony in my favour than if I were appointed plenipotentiary at congress by the three most considerable powers in Europe.

It has besides afforded me another and still greatet pleasure: it has shown me that Providence favours the institution — for you are its best protector. I was therefore very sorry that you were prevented from being present at the first meeting. Neighbour, I summon you, with your leave, to appear at the second, were you a priest, dead, or married. I even do more, for I place the tribunal under your immediate protection; without you, all this business, done with a view to confer benefit, will fall to the ground.

If you neglect this, I shall go so far as to form rash opinions, and think that the vice of gentle blood has some how or other laid hold of you. Do you consider it as I do, that vile pride which on the one

part induces men to hold out a hand to every distributor of benefits and surcharges, to ask as favours the price of services, to beg all their lives for places and distinctions, or what is worse, to beg for money; and, on the other part, makes them look down upon their brethren and equals, who happen to be born tradesmen and peasants, and think that they were demeaning themselves to take a seat upon a bench with those whose harvest they share, in the persuasion that a nickname or etiquette distinguishes and divides dust, and that the effigy and the motto change the alloy of the metal?

Tell those men to prostrate themselves before a dollar and you are sure to excite their scorn, if not their anger; but have patience, place dollar upon dollar, and as the pile grows higher you will perceive their assumed dignity decrease in proportion. They will at length sell their daughters, and even themselves, to gain possession of that baneful but infallible magnet of whatever belongs to vanity. They may be considered happy should no person attempt to extend to crime the effect of their subjection and delirium, and raise this perfidious heap so high as to conceal from their sight, conscience, principle, and honour.

Such, my dear neighbour, is the light in which the eyes of reason and experience enable me to view the principle of our mean and foolish vanity. If we are better than our neighbours by birth, the merit belongs to our forefathers, and not to ourselves; but even our progenitors never acquired that merit by looking down upon their companions and natural inferiors, for nobody could ever, by his own unaided exertions, obtain considerable advantages. The time when kings bestowed preferment and nobility is still very recent, so that nobody will confess he belongs to it. Every other proceeds from the people and public opinion.

You have but just now been made illustrious in this way. You will perhaps be told that tradesmen and peasants have been thus distinguished in other parishes. Undoubtedly because you were not there: but they were elected by their equals; you, by your inferiors. This makes it widely different. In your thirty-ninth year, whilst you were at your mansion, two thousand poor people left their cottages to declare that they elected you their arbitrator and judge; such was the first institution of kings, and the most sacred inauguration.

Therefore, my dear neighhour, I recommend and place under your protection our tribunal of conciliation, I perceived that you were glad at seeing N—— united to A——. Something more is wanted. He should reign there, he should judge, he should promote the joy of the landlord and the happiness of the country. I expect from your politeness that would do the honours at the meeting of the 3rd of March, or I give you warning, as it is necessary that those two head quarters, formerly at variance, now united and friendly, should meet, that I would rather bring the whole to M. N——, or declare war against you, and I should like to see whether the first man against whom I should have committed an act of hostility in the course of thirty years, would still be loved and honoured by every body. Meanwhile, I profess to be, with kind and respectful attachment,

My dear neighbour, &c.

M. L——'S REPLY TO THE MARQUIS OF M——.

March 26th 1771.

You wish it, Sir! I have therefore nothing further to examine. My incapacity will not be admitted, I must undertake it, and behold me at your disposal. What do you wish for more? Acknowledge what is possible, flatter less my self-love, and I shall always be ready to oblige you in spite of the reflections which you have so ably set at rest. I am glad to see F—— united to A——. You have been so kind as to comply with my wishes in that respect! what would I not do to pay this debt to you! This is truly a poor indemnity, but it is a free homage to which you are entitled. I have thus only to return you my thanks, and I proceed with closed eyes, considering myself most happy in having an opportunity of pleasing you, and deserving your favours. Permit me still another observation. You know not, Sir! (excuse the term) to what you expose yourself! Open your eyes, and imagine a young spark come to A——, from Paris, with the morose countenance of a magistrate who thinks less of the public than of himself; his first care being properly to line his stomach for fear of accidents, and then knitting his brows

to make the sign of the cross, after the fashion of the people of Normandy. Whatis the consequence? a sentence condemning the garden of A——, to furnish immediately and without delay twelve poplars that have been taken and carried away *ipso facto*? This is my whole operation. Are you satisfied?—not much. But how will it end?—I really do not know. To be brief, Sir, the poplars and the people are yours. I see very well that you will also have the magistrate. This produces another sentence, which adjudicates him to you. Dispose of your humble," &c.

The worthy gentleman, whose answer this is, did not write it till he had been present at the second meeting, where he did as much business by himself as all the others. In reality, a judge's superiority of rank exercises great influence over the dignity and efficacy of his sentences. Be this as it may, the kind-hearted old lord had the satisfaction of seeing his excellent new institution succeed. It might be well to follow this example, at least in the country, where unreasonableness and animosity, more than self-interest, are the cause of litigation. In general, peace cannot be too much simplified, nor can the means instituted to establish and perpetuate it be rendered too accessible. The justice that is only to approach us through science, is liable to be stopped in the avenues. It is said to be a necessary evil in great communities. This question, however, is foreign to our subject: but, as far as we are concerned, the first sentence we shall cause to be placed on the door of my little dwelling, will be this—

Quiconque est loup agisse en loup,
C'est le plus certain de beaucoup.

LA FONTAINE.

END OF VOL. I.

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MEMOIRS OF MIRABEAU.

BOOK IV.

It would be easy for us, without much labour or research, to give a very complete account of Mirabeau's marriage. We should only have to copy a part of the justification concluding the first volume of the correspondence from Vincennes *, a production as remarkable for strength of logic, address, and temperance of language, as the interest it excites. This narrative is lucidly and elegantly written. The fear, however, of rendering this episode too long, prevents us from transcribing it. We therefore limit our account of the marriage to a few pages, in which, according to the plan we have hitherto adopted, we give extracts from the unpublished correspondence in our possession, preferring it, as we do, to printed documents.

Mirabeau was at that time the only member of his

* Dated March 1st 1778. See vol. iv. of the original edition, pp. 287—436.

family residing in Provence; for, "neither the Marquis, nor his brother, nor any of the elder members of the family, gave themselves the trouble to be present at the marriage of the heir of their house to one of the richest heiresses in the kingdom *." The Marquis did not appear to attach much importance to it, as is proved by the continuation of a letter, the beginning of which we have already given. In it the habitual and rapid change in the writer's opinions are very evident.

"It is well to inform you that I have an *impegno* more than many others: I have adopted the mania and pretension of managing my own business, and remaining an honest man notwithstanding. It was thus necessary that I should free my conscience from the future remorse of having presented a man of such temper to become the father of a family. I therefore protested, strongly, and at great length, that we neither knew nor presented him; that I left him at Aix, a town as large as

* Unpublished notes by Mirabeau, upon the minutes of the above-mentioned justification of the 1st of March 1778. The unfortunate result of this union were partly to be attributed to these circumstances. The Bailli gives evidence of this:—"I shall lament during the remainder of my life not having gone to Provence when he married."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 26th* 1781.

These details show the error which Peuchet committed, in supposing that Mirabeau's uncle was with him at that period, an error which afterwards proved highly prejudicial to the nephew. Vol. i. p. 87.

a snuff-box, in order that he might be known, judged, &c.; but they take him, they will have him, and I give him to them with all my heart. I make over to him nothing but some entailed property, and I have inserted in the marriage settlement, the same condition respecting what his wife is to have. This settlement is to be as free as possible from all legal jargon. After that, I give them my paternal blessing, and many other things, (except lace, which I do not like because it yields no manure,) for women love a good appearance. Thus, in all probability, he will soon marry the heiress of Marignane, who has great expectations and more than six hundred thousand francs certain at present. I have lately written about this less than trifling affair, more than St. Jerome ever did, and indeed I do not digest better than he would have done, if, when he left off his grass, he had been invited to a wedding feast. But we can make tools only from the materials we possess. What I here mention is not to play the coxcomb, and insinuate that under any circumstances I should not have looked upon the marriage as a very advantageous one. But if my son had been more like myself, as I am not very covetous, I should have kept him to myself, in spite of his ardour, which being of the same kind as my own, is not fit to serve as a lining. But the young lady has a tolerable person, a good reputation, and considerable energy of

character. She was brought up under the care of an avaricious grandmother *, who did not treat her as a rich heiress, although she is one †."

This latter qualification which is always appreciated, had, more than the young lady's personal attractions, rendered her an object of universal admiration and homage. Mary Emily de Covet, only daughter of the Marquis of Marignane, was then eighteen years of age. Her features were plain, and even appeared vulgar at first sight; her complexion was very dark, almost Moorish; she had fine eyes and beautiful hair; but her teeth were not very good. A sweet smile continually played upon her lips. Her figure was small, but well formed although she leant a little on one side. She was gay, lively, sensible, and mild; and her disposition was very amiable ‡. The Marquis of Marignane, being separated from the Marchioness, Emily led rather a dull life. She was scolded from morning to night by her grandmother, with whom she lived, and who was nicknamed La Renarelle. Being neglected by her father and ill-treated by her mother, any circumstance which relieved

* Her maternal grandmother, the Marchioness of Maliverni.

† Unpublished letter, already quoted, from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated May 1st 1742.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 1st 1772. At this period, which was four months after the marriage, the Bailli was at Mirabeau, where he remained a few days prior to his departure for Malta.

her from this situation appeared to her very desirable *. She therefore showed no disinclination to marriage, and readily accepted the proposals made to her.

The first offer made, was by a person who did not seem likely to have any rivals:—the Count of Valbelle, one of the most opulent and magnificent nobles of the province, and at the same time the most intimate friend of the lady's father †. But this offer failed from the following circumstance.

"Madame des Rolands, queen of the Court of Love, that is to say of the society at Tourves (the Count of Valbelle's residence), became exceedingly alarmed, as you may easily imagine; for she every day expected the death of her husband, who was eighty years of age. This marriage would have destroyed all her plans, and made her lose the benefit of the earnest she had given him of their future union, and which was pretty generally known. Tears, threats, supplications, all means were employed to dissuade the Count from the marriage. She at length introduced and praised

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated February 22nd 1783.

† We find, in a letter from the Bailli of Mirabeau, the following passage concerning the Count of Valbelle.

"There never was a man of more dignified manners: his character was ostentatious, his imagination still more so. He displayed his character in his will, dated 1778. His legacy to the Academy did not proceed from any taste for literature, which he liked neither more nor less than china-ware: it was an act of mere ostentation."—*Unpublished letter, dated May 15th* 1779.

little Lavallette, and the marriage with the latter was almost settled, although the Marquis of Grammont, the Marquis of Caumont, the Viscount Chabrillant, D'Albertat and others, presented themselves and made the most advantageous proposals. Limaye * urged me on. I got warm upon the subject, and set to work, the more so, because I felt myself suddenly roused by an expression of my father's †. They were astonished to see Madlle. de Marignane undecided, although the articles with Lavallette were signed. The Court of Love raised a furious cabal against me, to which I paid no attention. They told me the place was impregnable, and not to be attacked. I admitted it, with the understanding, however, that I knew of few things not to be overcome, and none that could not be attacked. Lavallette, I was told, made many remarks upon my birth, my personal qualities, and my fortune; I proved that Lavallette had not even the honour of being *yellow*, as it is termed, for he was not of noble birth; that he possessed not, and would never possess, even twelve thousand francs a year. Mademoiselle de Marignane said to him—

"'I promised, sir, but the promise was made upon false representations.'

---

* The Countess of Limaye, a relation of the Mirabeau family. The biographer Peuchet, accustomed to disfigure names, calls her Madame de Limay, lib. i. p. 90.

† See the Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 302.

"'Who dares to say so?'

"The grandmother replied in her falsetto voice, 'The count of Mirabeau, who begged I would name him.'

Lavallette set off next day. But you may well conceive that the Court of Love was almost mad on the occasion *.

This account, written eight years after the event, to a person who took no share in the transaction, is in part correct.

Until the year 1772, Mirabeau, confined in the paternal mansion, and wholly occupied in farming and agricultural experiments, had frequently refused proposals of marriage which his family had renewed, being extremely desirous of perpetuating the name, and far gone with the mania of having posterity. These were the very expressions used by the Bailli, who then resided at Versailles.

In the advantages of birth and intellect, Mirabeau had no rival to fear; but he was not, like his competitors, endowed with personal advantages, and he possessed no actual income of his own. He thus unhesitatingly retreated before the first refusal; but the harsh and unjust reproaches of the Marquis stimulated his pride, and he presented himself a second time. He

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madame du Saillant, dated October 15th 1780.

exerted the powers of pleasing which he possessed to a great degree, and he soon had every chance of success. But his father now refused to fulfil the stipulations he had already agreed to, relative to the marriage settlements. Mirabeau therefore again hesitated to push his suit. Already much involved, from the penury to which the avarice of his father had reduced him, joined to his taste for show, and his excessive negligence in money matters, which was his failing through life, he apprehended that his difficulties would still increase, from the wish he very naturally entertained, not to expose a young female, hitherto in the enjoyment of all the luxuries of opulence, to the inconveniences arising from a straitened income. Emily's love dissipated his fears; it was further "assisted by all the women whose heads he had turned*." She put aside every obstacle, and on the 22nd of June 1772, Mirabeau obtained her hand, for which he was indebted in part to interested motives†,

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau. "Marignane is himself a madman in giving his daughter to a madman; but the youth had gained over all the female relations, both old and young."

† This man, who was much esteemed (for esteem is easily acquired in our country), thus gave his daughter in marriage because it cost him only three thousand francs a year, instead of four thousand, which he was to have given to Lavallette."— *Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 31st 1777.* It is but fair to mention this fact, in opposition to the reproach of

but mostly to an affection at that time lively and devoted, and not to base seduction, as some persons shamefully asserted*, and published.

---

cupidity addressed to Mirabeau and his family at the time of the law proceedings for a separation, which caused so much scandal at Aix in 1783.

* Mirabeau several times contradicted these rumours or reproaches in the most vehement manner, and that too in the very places where the truth was most likely to be known—for what can remain unknown in a small town? He particularly refuted this calumny in the paper which he published in 1783 and 1784, during the proceedings for a separation. See, 1st p. 31. of "Observations on a slanderous libel, called Brief and Counsel's opinion in the case of the Countess of Mirabeau," Aix, Joseph David, 1783, 302 pages; 2ndly, p. 5 in the note of "Justification of the Count of Mirabeau, suppressed at the moment of its publication by the especial command of the Keeper of the Seals, and republished from respect for the king and justice, with a conversation on the subject between the Keeper of the Seals and the Count of Mirabeau," 1784, 8vo. In a publication prior to this (Observations for the Count of Mirabeau. &c., Aix, Joseph David, 1783, 73 pp. 8vo.) he states "Madlle. de Marignane married, on the 22nd of June 1772, the Count of Mirabeau, and every one in the province knows that he was the husband of her choice." (p. 1). His adversaries, eager to slander him, thus spoke of this sentence, the meaning of which is so clear.

"The Count of Mirabeau has not feared to endeavour to calumniate the very principle of a union, the privileges of which he now dares to claim."

Nothing can be more energetic and peremptory than the refutation which Mirabeau gave to this dastardly insinuation, attributing to him a design so contrary to the object he had in view. Nevertheless his principal biographer, Peuchet, ever eager for scandal, in vol. i. p. 97, earnestly insists upon the probability of seduction; but, according to his constant habit, does not adduce the slightest proof. In this instance, at least, he had none.

However splendid this union in a pecuniary sense, its advantages could be realised only at some future and indefinite period. Mirabeau never enjoyed these advantages. He did not squander his wife's property, as has been published*, for he received no property with her, except a pension of three thousand francs a year†, and a promise of three hundred thousand francs at the death of the Marquis of Marignane, who survived his son-in-law twelve years. He obtained nothing from the Marchioness of Mirabeau, although she entertained a marked preference for her eldest son, a partiality which, as will presently be shown, was often the subject of disgraceful attacks. She was perhaps vexed at not having *been consulted* on the marriage, of which she was merely informed by the following sentence, bearing the full imprint of conjugal despotism:—

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* Chaudon's Dictionary, vol. viii. p. 309; small Universal Biography, termed Classic, Paris, Gosselin, 1829, second part, p. 2006; Pocket Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary, &c., vol. ii. p. 500, &c. See also "History of France in the Eighteenth Century," by Charles Lacretelle, Paris, 1821, vol. vii. p. 19. When details like these are inserted in general history they ought to be true, and free from calumny.

† And not six thousand, as stated by P. Chaussard, p. 25 of the "Summary" which precedes the "Esprit de Mirabeau," Paris, Buisson, Year V., 1797, first edition; and also by the authors of the "New Biography of Contemporaries," by Arnault, Jay, Jouy, &c., vol. xiii. p. 348, second column. Even the pension of three thousand francs was liable to a very considerable reduction.

" Our son will be married when you receive this; he is under a father's authority, as you are under that of a husband *."

With regard to the Marquis of Mirabeau, he only granted a barren entail, and a pension of six thousand francs. Notwithstanding the expenses attendant upon a sumptuous wedding, the purchase of the bridal clothes, and the presents which local custom rendered it indispensable to make to the numerous female friends and companions of the bride, he did not, on this occasion, belie his usual parsimony †. He turned a deaf ear to his son's entreaties, if we may judge by the following extract from a letter written by the timid steward to his haughty lord:—

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Marchioness of Mirabeau, dated June 14th 1772. Our conjectures are strengthened by the following passage in a letter from Mirabeau to his mother.

" Whatever may have been the motives which prevented you from signing my marriage settlement, it was for me to be afflicted at the circumstance, and to respect the hand which chastised me, without the possibility of my heart believing that it was merited. You did not condescend to answer the letter in which I had the honour of informing you of my marriage I had hoped, from your kindness, that you would not disapprove of this alliance, although you did not think proper to sanction it even by your signature. I did not expect, nor think, that I had to encounter a silence, which appears to impose the same obligation upon me."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated August* 18*th* 1772.

† " In fact, as Marignane gave one thousand francs less than he was to have given to Lavallette, I had no need to play the generous." —*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 2nd* 1781.

" I have paid his draft of two hundred crowns; this sum, if I may make bold to say it, appeared to me very trifling, when the great expenses are considered*."

The Count was obliged to pay some notarial expenses, which his father obstinately refused to settle.

" M. Raspaud (the notary) has called upon me for a heavy sum, for registry dues, and I had hoped that you would have passed it in my accounts, and have made this present to your son†."

Even the friends of the Marquis met with no better success in their interference, and particularly his former companion in arms, M. de Saint-Cézaire‡.

Mirabeau, thus treated, was unable to resist the consequences of his necessitous situation, the effects of his liberal and even prodigal disposition, and also perfidious suggestions, if we may credit the assertions of his uncle the Bailli, who, eleven years subsequently wrote as follows:—

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* Unpublished letter from Clapier, the steward, to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 24th 1772.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 27th 1772.

‡ Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 314. The brave Saint-Cézaire fell nine years after, in the fatal sea fight of the 12th of April 1781, when the Count of Grasse was vanquished and taken prisoner. This naval hero showed in that action, as he did on every other occasion, great bravery but little talent. This relates to the Count of Grasse Tilly (François Joseph Paul), Lieutenant-General of the naval forces, born in 1725, and who died January 11th 1788.

"No sooner was he married, than every opportunity was sought to ruin him. He certainly laid himself open to these attacks, but matters have been exaggerated. You will perhaps reply, that I formerly said he degraded his name; but this had been told me, and I was deceived by those very persons who, for a length of time, had been busily employed in unmarrying him*."

Prior to the final settlement of the marriage, Mirabeau confessed to his father-in-law, the pecuniary embarrassments he laboured under; but the latter, whose affairs were by no means in good order, did not attach sufficient importance to this communication. Every day added fresh difficulties to Mirabeau's situation, by the accumulation of principal and interest on usurious loans, the fictitious capital of which was frequently swelled out with "trinkets, clothes, jewellery, as in Laflecke's bill†."

Mirabeau, alarmed, and being well convinced that an application to his father would be fruitless, and that he should incur reproach and persecution, confided his situation to the Marquis of Marignane‡, who offered to

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 7th 1783.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 18th 1780. We need scarcely say, that this is in allusion to a scene in the second act of Moliere's "Avare."

‡ This fact is doubly proved by the examination which we will mention, and by the pleadings of Mirabeau in Provence. (See especially p. 136 of the "Observations upon a defamatory libel called

advance him the sum of sixty thousand livres, the repayment of which was to have depended upon an event not yet accomplished, and of which nothing denoted the accomplishment. This decisive succour would have saved Mirabeau; but his father's consent was indispensable. An absolute refusal, accompanied with threats, was the only reply which the Marquis returned to the solicitations of his son, and the intercession of that son's father-in-law *.

Mirabeau being thus harassed by creditors whom it was out of his power to satisfy,—seeing also the impossibility of paying his debts, and preventing their rapid increase, and likewise the difficulty of receiving his scanty income, which was attached on all sides, quitted Aix, where his expenses were excessive, and sought refuge in the rustic solitude of his paternal castle, where, however, new dangers awaited him. Being desirous, on the one hand, of fitting up for his wife an apartment "which had already become antiquated in the time of his venerable great-grandmother, Anne of Pontevès †," he very inconsiderately undertook

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Brief and Counsel's Opinion on the Case of the Countess of Mirabeau," Aix, 1738, Joseph David, 202 pp. 4to.)

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 37.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his sister, Madame du Saillant, dated November 14th 1772.

"The folly that this madman has committed, in heightening, wainscoting, and gilding for his wife the only chamber which suited me, put me very much out of my way, for I shall never find courage

alterations which cost three times the sum stated in the estimate. On the other hand, being beset at Mirabeau by a chaplain, a steward, and a farmer, all declared enemies of each other, he was dragged into law-suits by the chaplain, into compositions by the steward, whilst the farmer induced him to enter into undertakings which aggravated his embarrassments, increased his debts, and ultimately set his father entirely against him.

" His law-suit with the communities," wrote the steward, " will absorb the revenue of the estate, and ruin the discipline of the vassals *."

" His composition was," according to the priest †, " a false step, an act of dangerous weakness," and according to the steward ‡, " a master-stroke ;" they even went so far as to accuse him of dilapidating the castle and the estate, a charge, as usual, readily believed by his father §, and not contradicted for several years by

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to inhabit an apartment resembling the Duke of Nivernois' drawing-room."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated July* 4th 1777.

* Unpublished letter from Boyer, the steward, dated December 13th 1772, to the Marquis of Mirabeau.

† Unpublished letter from the Abbé Castagny to the same, dated January 16th 1773.

‡ Unpublished letter from Boyer to the same, dated February 6th 1773.

§ Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 3rd 1782. This same steward, whose accusations against Mirabeau were so implicitly believed, had been previously

the Bailli, who at last wrote to his brother in the following terms:—

"I have ascertained that he was calumniated, during his stay here, relative to the cutting down of the timber. The very persons who accused him, plundered the castle *. The facts which they succeeded in making you believe, are totally false. He neither cut down, nor sold any timber, nor disposed of any furniture †."

We will now give a final explanation of the persecutions followed by such dreadful consequences

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pointed out to the Marquis as a man against whom he ought to be on his guard.

"Your steward by no means succeeded in blinding your son, no more than he succeeded in blinding me, during the survey of the estate, which took place by your order and mine. Your son perceived that he did not seek to inform us of every particular, and thought with me, that you pay for a great number of repairs which are beneficial only to the farmer."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 18th* 1770. We may remark here that this farmer was the steward's brother.

* "Honoré was accused of spoliation by those very persons who sold the furniture: several peasants of the village are possessed of very fine linen."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 3rd* 1782.

"You were, however, made to believe that I injured the Mirabeau estate. I wish that nobody had done more harm there than I did, and that your agents may have had no other motive for making me leave that place."—*Original Letters from Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 323.

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 7th 1783. The father himself had written four years previously: "that madman put every thing in disorder, but he brought more than he took away."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 14th* 1779.

quences for Mirabeau, by stating what was written to the Marquis.

"The Count unfortunately rejects good advice, and listens to bad. He suffers himself to be carried away by the empty sound and smoke of flatterers, who present fine schemes, prepare him work for a length of time, and then, as an excuse, plead his determination of character *." At the very same period, one of the farmers asserted directly the reverse.

"With an advance of thirty thousand francs, the Count will be able to clear all the land, and effectually dam in the Durance †."

It appears that Mirabeau was of the same opinion, for he afterwards wrote to his father—

"This undertaking would, in the course of ten years, I do not say, have paid my debts, but I mean to assert that it would have doubled the income from the Mirabeau estate, and the number of its inhabitants ‡."

The Marquis, however, was as much inclined as ever, to disbelieve favourable accounts; but at the same time yielded the most implicit belief to accusations. Having procured a lettre de cachet, he

* Unpublished letter from the Abbé Castagny, to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 14th 1772.

† Letter from Farmer Thabot to the same, dated November 6th 1772.

‡ Paper by Mirabeau, addressed to his father, dated March 1st 1778. Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 323.

made use of it to order his son to leave the castle, and confine himself in the small town of Manosque.

Here it was that domestic sorrow and the most painful circumstances assailed the exile, but they afflicted without disheartening him. They did not prevent him from pursuing serious studies, and composing his first work, the "Essay on Despotism." Of this production we shall not speak at present, because it would interrupt the thread of our narrative, which requires to be connected, in order to be comprehensible.

A short time after, the Marquis of Mirabeau endeavoured to obtain a sentence of interdiction against his son *.

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* It was at this very time that the quarrels between the Marquis and the Marchioness, which had hitherto been kept nearly private, obtained a scandalous publicity in consequence of a law-suit. The Marquis's animosity is sufficiently well depicted in the following extract:—

"The voice of my ancestors has reached me, my spirit is roused, I raise my head, and have determined how to act. I have hitherto been guided by, and perhaps carried too far, a feeling of patience which was not in the blood of those whose representative I have the honour to be. This feeling would lead me to see and put up with the revolt of my family, to become notoriously the victim of their general impunity, and to see everything which has been confided to me dwindle away in my own hands. If Providence has decreed the downfal of my house, and this event happens during my unfortunate supremacy as its head, it must not, at all events, be imputed to weakness on my part. Too much vivacity, in the supposition that I can be accused of such a thing, will not be degenerating from the feeling and temper of my forefathers. A weak

We have in our possession Mirabeau's examination before the "local-lieutenant, performing (at Manosque) the duties of general-lieutenant, during the vacation of

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and dastardly spirit would prove me unworthy of having succeeded them.

"I shall therefore begin, and make such a public exposure as is demanded by my situation and my honour, which, implicated as it is, can no longer tolerate half measures. If my children are afraid to witness it, they may retire. I shall not feel hurt; far from it: but if they remain, I forbid them, from this day, as their father and chief, ever to speak to me about this transaction, with reference either to the past or to the future, unless I call upon them to do so. With regard to my friends, a mournful silence will soon teach them that a man is desirous of being advised only to a certain extent. You alone have, and shall always possess the right of saying everything to me; but I hope that as you have, through your kindness, inhaled and swallowed the infection contained in this cup, with which in fact you had nothing to do, you will not disapprove of my having relieved you from the burthen. You will feel how unavailing the efforts of reason must prove in the midst of all this. You will allow me to speak, and support my load, and you willwait until I have exhausted my strength, before you relieve me. You will, above all, feel that when a man, from a sense of duty and honour, or from necessity, goes beyond the limits of his own disposition, he runs the risk, by the slightest check, of being overwhelmed with fatigue without the slightest benefit."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 1st 1774.*

We have transcribed this terrible manifesto merely to point out the beginning of a succession of lawsuits which are but too well known, and exercised too great an influence over Mirabeau's fate, to justify our omitting it here. But we refer to this unfortunate subject as seldom as possible, because the development of an episode so pregnant with scandal is in nowise necessary to the truth of our

the royal tribunal and Seneschal's jurisdiction of Forcalquier." We shall extract some particulars from this document, not only because it is unpublished, but also on account of its official and judicial character, which induces us to prefer it to the justification already mentioned, of the 1st of March 1778, published with the Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes. This justification is certainly more eloquently elaborate, but, in our opinion, it bears less the stamp of authenticity, inasmuch as it is addressed to the public, as much and perhaps more than to the Marquis. Besides, we may be allowed to suppose that Mirabeau made it as favourable to himself as possible, a thing he could not do in a judicial proceeding like that from which we have transcribed one of the documents.

" I protest," says Mirabeau, in the procès verbal of the sitting of the 9th of May 1774, " I protest against the competency of the tribunal (the Châtelet of Paris), in whose name I am interrogated; a tribunal one hundred and fifty leagues distant from the province in which I have resided ever since my marriage, a province in which, and in no other place, without any exception, my creditors are to be found, as is also the proof of my debts.

" I do not pretend to act against my father's will, which I shall ever consider a sacred and inviolable law; but I trust my protest will prove that my submis-

sion is to be attributed solely to filial respect, since I am not ignorant of the means to which I can have recourse in my defence before the law of the land.

"Let me be allowed, before I reply to the different questions about to be put to me, and in reference also to the above protest, to invoke the paternal clemency with regard to my answers, which will no doubt be submitted to my first master and natural judge. To him I dare appeal, and ask, whether my heart is hardened and depraved, and whether the irregularities of my past life prove incontestibly and for ever the delirium of my mind. Him I will dare ask what man would not have been ruined, if his maturer age was judged by the aberrations of his youthful years, however wild and impetuous they may have been? My conduct has been foolish and reprehensible—I confess it without shame: let the judge now deign to listen to the observations which may plead in extenuation of my errors, diminish their consequences, and suspend the sentence which the court is about to pronounce.

"It is true that I have contracted a great number of liabilities, the amount of which shall be presently specified; but to be liable and to owe are two very different things. The most scrupulously honourable man must not blindly present his head to the usurer's sword. I have spent a great deal too much; nevertheless my expenditure has been moderate in proportion to my engagements. But, it may be said: What more

certain proof can we have of your madness than the circumstance of your having contracted liabilities for enormous sums, when those you actually received were trifling? The history of my debts becomes here indispensably necessary: it will prove, that after I had taken the first step, it became almost impossible for me not to fall into the extreme of difficulty. And where is the man presumptuous enough to hope that he shall never commit a first fault? If such a one exist, let him cast the accusing stone at me."

We here terminate our extract, and continue it only in a note *, because the particulars which

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* "Family circumstances prevented my father from giving me more than six thousand francs a year when I married. The Countess of Mirabeau brought me only three thousand. I saw everything with the eyes of a young man of twenty, and I expected a larger income. My hopes were never realised, and the illusions in which I had indulged, did not vanish with them. I had married a young lady of quality, and through my connexion with her respectable family I became allied to a great many persons in a province where I have myself numerous relatives. The greater number of these were present at my marriage, which took place at Aix, the provincial capital. I married a lady who had a right to hope that her children would be heirs to great wealth. I thought myself obliged to make her amends for the privations to which my limited income would subject her. I did not calculate the expenses attending the frivolous enjoyments of the moment. If this sometimes occupied my thoughts I always dismissed the reflections it occasioned. I should have been much more humiliated at the idea of not yielding something to ostentation on the occasion of my marriage, because at first I made much greater offers than my father has been able to fulfil.

"My uncle was good enough to load the Countess of Mirabeau

follow would appear a sort of repetition of a preceding part of our narrative. We therefore proceed directly to the conclusion of the document.

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with presents; but I, very inconsiderately, made a great addition to them. The custom in Provence prescribes presents to all persons present at the wedding. A man is rigorously obliged to conform to this usage, and I did it with ruinous prodigality. The state of my father's affairs did not allow him to advance me any money; I was thus necessarily obliged to have recourse to loans. The ruinous but easy resources which young men of family find under such circumstances are well known. They offer no attractions to a man in his cool and collected moments; but coolness and collectedness do not exist in cases of emergency. A red-hot bar of iron tempts a drowning man—such was my situation. As a bachelor, I had incurred debts: I had been five months at Aix, with my father's approbation, as I was negociating a marriage to which he had given his consent. His agents certainly did not remit me so much as twenty-five louis. I had arrived with a single coat, after a residence of six weeks in the country; and I was obliged to clothe myself, and to live respectably, on coming to reside at Aix. When to these accumulated and ruinous debts were added the engagements contracted at the period of my marriage, the whole was more than sufficient to overwhelm me. It became utterly impossible to establish anything like order amid this confusion, without the aid of my family. I saw nothing before me but the most imminent misfortunes; I was alarmed at the depth of the abyss into which I was about to plunge. A foolish shame prevented me from revealing in time the deranged state of my finances, and throwing myself at my parent's feet. I had begun in thoughtlessness, I continued through necessity, I ended in weakness; and when I spoke it was too late. My father-in-law wished to lend me a helping hand. In my marriage settlement he had engaged to give me sixty thousand livres, at a period which I pray heaven long to avert. He offered to advance them to me in order to pay my debts, and at that time such a sum would have been more than sufficient to liquidate them. He agreed to advance them to me on condition that my father would give

" I have stated everything; I have disguised neither my errors nor my faults, nor the different revolutions in my conduct and mind, nor the innermost feelings of my heart. That heart, carried away by an impetuous imagination, has not, however, been led astray: I dare assert it.

" One question more, and I will submit everything, my personal liberty, my reputation, my honour—(and all these, my moral possessions, are dearer to me than life itself)—I submit them to my father, whose authority I will never challenge. Is it possible to conclude from the conduct of a man of three-and-twenty, what he will be when he has become the father of a family? Is it even possible to judge from one year to another, during the frenzy of youth, in the first exacerbation of

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him a receipt for the amount, because, by a clause in my marriage settlement, my father alone could receive my wife's dower. Alas! I was staying with my father-in-law, and had interested him in my favour; my father was far from me, and he saw me only with prejudice. Fears for the future, perhaps well founded, for a person who could not penetrate into the feelings of my heart, overcame his natural goodness, and he refused. Yes, my father, let your son believe that you would have assisted him had you known him better; had you witnessed his contrition. Let him believe, that if he had not had the misfortune to be estranged from your affection, he would not have been lost for you and himself. I acknowledge my error: I saw nothing but injustice and violent passion, in refusals where I ought to have seen only the vigilant care of a parent. Despair threw me into the whirlpool which has caused my ruin. I wished to rouse myself when it was no longer time. My father has punished me, and his arm is still uplifted against me."

burning passions, of a man who is destitute of neither good sense nor good feeling, and in less than a year has experienced every species of anxiety, all the humiliation attendant on a broken fortune, and has found himself obliged to drag his wife with him into ruin, and thus endanger the life of the mother and nurse of his child, the peace and happiness of his father, his uncle, and his father-in-law, that is to say, of every one he holds dearest in the world? The thing is impossible; and were this a friend's cause, I would plead it triumphantly before the tribunals. I appeal to you, my father, for your heart is more just and indulgent than all the tribunals in the world. I will not repeat here what I have ventured to write to you. It is you alone I require as my judge. I have said enough to rouse your paternal feelings; they will prove my best advocate, and I will neither speak to other magistrates, nor withdraw myself from your authority. If my errors, however great—if my conduct, however reprehensible, have been aggravated in your opinion, be your own judge, and believe that you are the only man whom your son respects sufficiently to address him thus. I know that to appeal to you as my judge is to awaken your generosity, throw you back upon your own feelings, and prevent you from acting a part too much beneath your personal and paternal dignity—that of my adversary. I have dared to offer you, and I here authenticate the offer in the presence of

the public prosecutor, to pay my debts with the sum of sixty thousand livres, ready money, the interest to be paid out of my income. What have you to fear? If my past conduct will not warrant your placing this sum at my disposal, confide it to any person you please. Besides, are you no longer my father? Who can withdraw me from your authority? Cannot the public prosecutor watch and arrest me? What security will you ever have of my repentance, if you deprive me of my civil rights? This is the last trial you owe to me, and to yourself: allow me to say so.

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"I have now, with the lieutenant's permission, to lay at your feet, O my father, the assurance of the profound respect, ardent affection, and unalterable obedience which my heart feels towards you, as strongly as nature herself has imposed them as a duty. Open your paternal arms to me once more. Receive your son, who submits entirely to your will, and claims only your indulgence."

Such is the substance of the examination which preceded the sentence of interdiction pronounced against Mirabeau. In his defence from the Donjon of Vincennes, he informs us* that the Marquis found his answers silly. The reader may judge of them by the

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, Paris, 1792, vol. i. p. 325.

foregoing extract. The son maintained that they were "full of respect" towards his father; and indeed, our extracts, far from proving the contrary, place Mirabeau, in our opinion, in a most interesting and favourable light. To him the shame of an interdiction was "a dreadful blow*; he had conceived a most humiliating idea of this formality †," but, on the present occasion, he made his natural impetuosity, and the consciousness of his right, yield to the respect which he felt for a father, always unjust and always irritated.

Thus, after more than a year of correct conduct, Mirabeau was judicially interdicted, under pretence of his dissipation, which had ceased, and for which his father had already punished him, without occupying himself in the least with the payment of his debts. These, on the contrary, increased every day from arrears of interest. But the Marquis's animosity was not satisfied with the sentence of interdiction; he obtained a letter of exile. Mirabeau had retired voluntarily to Manosque, and was now forcibly detained there. The fault which caused him to absent himself for an instant,—a fault not only natural, but even doubly honourable, as we shall presently show,—threw him into a career of misfortune, which from that period became interminable and beyond remedy. A young man, the Chevalier Gassaud,

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, Paris, 1792, vol. i. p. 325.

† Idem.

a relative of the Countess of Mirabeau, had, previously to her marriage, kept up a sort of epistolary correspondence with her, breathing much less of passion than of playful wit on his part, and much love of admiration on hers. The Chevalier continued to visit Mirabeau at Manosque. The resentment of a discharged servant roused the irritable temper of the husband, and inspired him with a strong feeling of jealousy, a passion, like all others, susceptible of extremes. A part of the correspondence was discovered, and adroitly commented upon; a violent altercation ensued, a duel seemed inevitable, and Mirabeau's well known expertness at the sword created much alarm. The parents of the supposed gallant interfered; his father, who was not an always irritated judge, begged for "his son's life." Mirabeau's generosity was awakened, he resisted his own violent feelings, and accepted from the father the plausible explanations offered. Without heeding blustering provocations, he silenced the son with dignity. At that moment, he learned that the publicity of the quarrel was on the point of breaking off an advantageous match between the Chevalier Gassaud and the daughter of the Marquis of Tourette. He blamed himself for this consequence of his momentary error, and felt alarmed lest the Countess of Mirabeau's reputation should suffer*. Feeling himself quite

* "I continue to render every service to the person who is the subject of this correspondence, because, in the public opinion,

certain of the ascendency which the rights of friendship gave him at the castle of Tourette, he left his house clandestinely, and in a few hours reached the castle, more than twenty leagues distant. He warmly pleaded the chevalier's cause, and by his irresistible eloquence, succeeded in placing the projected marriage upon the same footing as before. He then set out, happy, to return to the place of his exile*.

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such service is connected with my wife's reputation."—*Statement by the Count of Mirabeau*, suppressed at the moment of its publication, &c., p. 8.

"I did not wish to be generous by halves; fearing that the reputation of my wife, the mother and nurse of my son, might be injured, I resolved to set out for Grasse, notwithstanding the king's orders, which forbade me to leave Manosque. Fatal journey! source of all my misfortunes!"—*Observations of the Count of Mirabeau upon a point of his case*, Aix, André Adibert, 1783, p. 34. We must here remark that these declarations, made during legal proceedings, exposed to contradictions which Mirabeau's adversary did not dare to offer, present quite a different character of authenticity from his own account of the transaction, without a chance of contradiction—*Original Letters from Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 339. This is the reason why, according to our usual custom, we do not seek our evidence in the letter.

* Peuchet, Mirabeau's principal biographer, has expressed some doubts respecting this fact, vol. i. pp. 113—115. We shall not stop to refute this opinion, our preceding extracts being more than sufficient for that purpose, but shall only remark that he brings forward no evidence in support of the conjectures suggested by his mania of weakening every favourable circumstance, and expatiating upon every error. We here confine ourselves to the remark, without fearing contradiction, that Peuchet had but an imperfect knowledge of Mirabeau, whose history he wrote merely to compile a large volume from other books, and that he was not formed to compre-

By an unfortunate chance, he met, on his way, the Baron Villeneuve Moans.

"This man, for these last twenty years, had law-suits, both civil and criminal, with his brother-in-law, the Marquis of Latour Roumoules, whom he had nearly ruined in this war of chicanery. The Marchioness of Cabris, the Count of Mirabeau's sister, moved by the situation of her relative, the Count of Latour, offered him every consolation and service that friendship could suggest. This was more than sufficient to render her the object of the Baron's hatred. He availed himself of the opportunity offered by a prosecution, in which the Marquis of Cabris was implicated with almost the whole town of Grasse, where he resided*; and under pretence of taking part in the public quarrel, grossly insulted the Marchioness of Cabris, at a public place†. The Count of Mirabeau

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hend what in a character like Mirabeau's, energetic, and forming a perfect exception to the general rule, was essentially different in its motives and acts from those of ordinary men.

* It appears that the young Marquis of Cabris was accused of being the author of "some defamatory verses, printed at Nice, and publicly placarded at Grasse, in which insults were lavished upon the most respectable inhabitants of the town."—*Explanatory paper annexed to an unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 7th* 1779.

† This account, which our private correspondence entirely confirms, destroys the imaginary suppositions in which Peuchet has indulged vol. i. p. 115, in order to compose an odious, we may even say, an infamous romance, founded upon an event of which he wanted to speak, without any knowledge of the circumstances, and without

demanded that satisfaction which is expected between gentlemen. Baron Moans, replied with an extraordinary mixture of insolence and cowardice; for after all, the least a man can do is to be humble, if he be a coward. A short time after, the Count of Mirabeau, having met the Baron of Moans, as we have already stated, chastised him with a horsewhip. Unfortunately some peasants witnessed the transaction, which the Baron of Moans bravely authenticated by a criminal prosecution. He dishonoured himself, it is true, but he had not in that respect much to lose, and the Count of Mirabeau found himself involved in the greatest difficulty, because the judicial inquiry proved him to have been absent from his place of exile. The affair was judged by the tribunal at Grasse, before a subaltern judge, a vassal of the plaintiff, more than two years after the quarrel, whilst Mirabeau was out of the kingdom, and without any defence having been furnished on his part. The first judgment condemned him, by default, to six thousand francs damages, and to reparation towards the tribunal. In other words, Baron Moans' dishonour was solemnly confirmed by an authentic sentence*.

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taking the trouble to recur to those very sources whence he has nevertheless so largely drawn, in order to compose without much trouble four large volumes.

* Unpublished manuscript additions to the statement of the 1st of March 1778, inserted in the Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 287.

This was the origin of Mirabeau's second confinement*, and to this confinement, are to be traced, not his first misfortunes, for we have shown that, from his very youth, he was unfortunate, but the first truly culpable act of which he was guilty. This circumstance induced us to interrupt our narrative for an instant, in order to characterise a fact, by no means extraordinary in this family, in which impetuosity and excitement seemed endemic diseases of the blood. The incident we have mentioned, insignificant and even frivolous in itself, produced dreadful consequences. We must remark that it was deemed unimportant, so long as it was not wanted as a pretence for excessive rigour.

"It was you who wrote. Let us forget M. de Villeneuve and his dung. You know that my father-in-law wrote to me after having read a paper on that subject†, that the strongest document which could

* Unpublished manuscript additions to the justification of the 1st of March 1778, inserted in the Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 193, 337; vol. iii. p. 583.

† This paper has not reached us, although Mirabeau sent it to his mother, as mentioned in a letter in our possession, and although it appears in the inventory of his personal estate. But we find in the "Dialogues" mentioned in the "Letters from Vincennes," vol. i. p. 44, 110, 116; vol. ii. p. 106; vol. iii. pp. 154, 231, 248; vol. iv. p. 134, that a printed copy found its way even to Franche-Comté, and greatly interested Madame de Monnier, who became acquainted with the author only six months later. He says to his mother, relative to this paper, in the letter we have just quoted—

"You will receive by the next post, that is to say, by Friday's mail, a copy of a paper relative to the affair of M. de Villeneuve,

appear for my defence was M. de Villeneuve's own petition. You know that all the Villeneuves were the first to praise my conduct in the business; that the old Marquis, who had become, in a manner, the head of that family, wrote to me as follows: 'Rely upon it, I shall always make an immense difference between a friend whose conduct, upon every important occasion, is as correct as yours, and a relative who would disgrace his family name, if infamy were not entirely personal*.'"

Finally, we have similar evidence in two letters from the Bailli of Mirabeau, although he was greatly irritated against his nephew. This arose both from the suggestions of the Marquis, which had an all-powerful influence over his mind, and the error which Mirabeau had committed just at the time the first of these letters was written.

"What is there so extraordinary in the grand-nephew of our uncles, and the grandson of our fathers, having taken the trouble to dust with a horsewhip the jacket of an insolent self-styled nobleman, who had the said jacket upon his back, and who thought proper to

together with the vouchers; it will show you the iniquity of which I have been made the victim, the manner in which I behaved, whether it is credible for a father to abandon such an affair, and whether I can make it up as long as I have breath in my body." —*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated January 30th* 1776.

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 336.

inform the Marshals of France of the trouble which the Count had taken to dust it *. But enough of this; let us talk no more of the affair of Moans. This man was in the wrong, for he provoked your madman; and if I had been in the situation in which Gabriel's sister had placed him, I am not sure I should not have acted as he did †."

In our turn we say:—

"Let us now dismiss this silly episode," of which we hear no more until after a lapse of eight years, when it was mentioned in a letter from the Bailli. He had formerly termed it "an unexampled misdeed ‡."

He afterwards wrote to his brother in the following terms:—

"I must confess that Baron Moans, although he asserts that he will not take any legal steps, will not, he says, withdraw his prosecution until his expenses are paid. What a dignified nobleman § !"

To this the Marquis replied:—

"With regard to the affair of Moans, I am of opinion that it is one of those disgraceful things which

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis de Mirabeau, dated May 4th 1781.

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated July 25th 1776.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 28th 1780.

§ Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated October 29th 1782.

ought to be forgotten, and that this valiant lord would feel himself much embarrassed to recommence his rascally suit*."

We must here remark, with sorrow, and for the last time, the consequences of this act, so truly insignificant, that it would have been very easy to obliterate them altogether, but that it was judged expedient they should be turned to account. Mirabeau, himself, pointed out a simple mode of counteracting them, in the following passage from the Vincennes correspondence:—

"Supposing I do not choose to appeal from a judgment, which, although given against me by default, is as honourable for me as it is degrading for my adversary: I should get rid of it altogether by giving him six thousand livres †."

Be that as it may, the punishment soon followed. On the 6th of June 1774, Mirabeau was taken from his home, where his child was then lying dangerously ill ‡, and on the 23rd of August following was imprisoned in the castle of If, a barren rock, with a gloomy citadel extending over its entire surface, and rising a little above the level of the sea. It is situated towards the entrance of, and at some distance from, the

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 15th 1782.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 9.

‡ Idem, vol. ii. p. 359.

port of Marseilles. Mirabeau allowed himself to be conducted thither, after having refused the means of escape, and pecuniary assistance offered him by a friend *. But his imprisonment was not the consequence of a condemnation, since, as we have just stated, sentence was passed only two years after; nor the result of public rumour, since every body, even including the family of the horse-whipped gentleman, concurred in blaming the prosecution, and despising his cowardice. Neither did it proceed from a spontaneous order of the sovereign and ministerial authority, against whose prohibitions Mirabeau had, however, doubly transgressed. The true author of this detention was the Marquis of Mirabeau, who demanded an order for his son's imprisonment "for having left the place of his banishment, also as a kind of satisfaction to the nobles of the province †, and in order to

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 343. The account given by Mirabeau himself to his father is too characteristic not to find a place here.

"I might have avoided coming to the Castle of If, had I been inclined to resist your authority. A friend had procured me a post-chaise; he pressed me to accept a hundred louis, and fly to the place of refuge he had prepared for me. I resisted his offers, I resisted the alluring call of freedom; I patiently submitted to the brutality of the satellites who arrested me, as if I had been a cut-purse. I allowed myself to be conducted to the Castle of If; but it was not for the purpose of there losing the fruits of my submission."

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 3rd 1778.

reserve to himself the right of soliciting, at a subsequent period, his son's release *."

It would thus appear that Mirabeau had merely to undergo the punishment inflicted by the chief of his family, and yet we find in the justification dated March 1st 1778, inserted at the end of the first volume of the correspondence from Vincennes, that he complains of the severity which the commandant was instructed to display towards him, by which he was deprived of all news, debarred from all communication with persons outside †, expressly forbidden to write ‡. Thus was an excess of severity, hardly conceivable in the case of a state prisoner, really applied to a man imprisoned from motives of paternal discipline. But did he not, it may be asked, exaggerate the statement of his situation, with a view that it should come, in an indirect manner, under the eyes of ministerial authority, and highly colour the hardships he endured, in order to excite compassion? The following extract will remove all doubts upon the subject.

" When I asked for the imprisonment of this man,

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* Manuscript notes upon the Minutes of the Justification, dated March 1st 1778, and letters from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Cabris, the father of his son-in-law, and to the Countess of Rochefort, dated August 13th and September 6th 1774.

† P. 342.

‡ P. 347.

I took care to request that all correspondence should be denied to him *. You know how strictly, and justly so, I had him kept at the castle of If, with regard to correspondence. Well! in the gaiters of peasants, letters were concealed, and conveyed to him, and the answers were returned between the leg and the gaiter †."

The Countess of Mirabeau was then at the Bignon, whither her husband had sent her, in the beginning of August, to endeavour to avert the imprisonment with which he was threatened. She quitted this place on her return to Aix, after the removal of Mirabeau, whom she refused to join, both at the castle of If, and the castle of Joux, and whom she never afterwards saw. At the period to which we refer, her testimony furnishes us with fresh evidence of the excessive rigour of her husband's captivity.

"My father-in-law wished to exact from me my word, that I would not take charge of any letter; I gave a downright refusal, saying that I should not be able to keep my promise, being unable and unwilling to refuse you any thing ‡."

Let us now examine the effect of this extraordinary

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 11th 1776.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 14th 1776.

‡ Letter from the Countess of Mirabeau to her husband, dated September 13th 1774, p. 7, of the "Observations for the Count of Mirabeau, &c." Aix, J. David, 1783.

mode of treatment, upon Mirabeau, with whose impetuosity and spirit of independence we are perfectly well acquainted.

"You make me violate my oath, my dear sister. My father has written to M. Dallègre (commandant of the castle of If), that the king's order did not except himself, nor my uncle, nor any one, from the prohibition I was under respecting writing. I did not expect this fresh instance of severity, and in the bitterness of my heart, I swore to hold no communication with any of my relatives, since my father rejected me with a kind of horror. I cannot, however, refrain from the pleasure of writing you a few lines, to thank you, with tears, and to assure you that my persecutors will make me break my heart, before they succeed in hardening it. You dare not own it, but you well know that I have not deserved the treatment I endure. Indeed, I should only laugh at it, were not my father the instigator of it. But to languish during four months in captivity with a set of miscreants, without being able to write a single word to my judge and natural protector; to encounter at once every species of suffering, and to lose in a single moment every consolation, is a misfortune against which I shall not be able long to bear up *."

The prisoner's sister was not the only person who

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his sister, Madame du Saillant, dated January 12th 1775.

felt interest in his fate. The same feeling actuated their brother, the Chevalier, who afterwards acquired much celebrity under the name of Viscount Mirabeau, and at the period to which we allude, was twenty years old. He learnt, at Malta, the quarrel which served as the pretence for his brother's imprisonment; and although suffering from illness, he immediately set out and arrived at Marseilles.

" The wind was excessively high, not a single captain would put to sea. I succeeded in deciding two of them, more by threats than by money, for you know I am not overburthened with cash, whilst I have, thank God, a plentiful stock of hard words. I arrived at the castle of If, the gates were closed, and the lieutenant, in the absence of Dallègre, quietly informed me that I must return as I came.

" ' Not so, if you please, without having seen Gabriel.'—' He is not to be seen.'—' I will write to him.'—' Just as impossible.'—' I will then wait for M. Dallègre.'—' Be it so, but only four and twenty hours, not more.'

" Thereupon I made up my mind, and calling upon Mother Mouret (a female sutler), we agreed that in the evening, after the retreat, I should see the poor devil. I went, therefore, not like a noble knight, but like a pickpocket, or like a lover, just as you please, and we immediately set to. It had been feared that he would have heated my brain up to the pitch of his own.

Justice is not done him; and I here declare that when he had spoken to me of his case, and the indignation excited by his bare account, had burst forth in these words: 'But although I am yet weak, I have arms, and they are still good enough to break, if not those of M. de Villeneuve, at least those of his brothers,' —he said to me, 'My dear friend, you would ruin us both;' and I confess to you that this consideration alone prevented me from executing a project, sufficiently ill-conceived, and which the fermentation of a harum-scarum fellow like myself can alone excuse *."

At the castle of If, at the Abbé Choquart's, at the island of Rhé, in his regiment, and at the Bailli's, Mirabeau's arrival had always been preceded by letters from the Marquis, exaggerating the faults, and errors, and blackening the character of his son. But at the castle of If, as every where else, the prejudices against Mirabeau soon gave way to the ascendency exercised by his happy temper, to his captivating frankness, and to the interest excited by the unceasing persecution directed against him. His wife, at that period residing at the castle of Bignon, the very source of these persecutions, wrote to the prisoner in the following terms:—

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* Unpublished letter from Viscount Mirabeau to his sister, the Marchioness of Cabris, dated November 1st 1774. This excursion of the Chevalier's is mentioned in a letter written a fortnight after, by the Countess of Mirabeau."—*Observations upon the Defamatory Libel*, &c., p. 160.

"I am struck with admiration, my dear friend, at the patience you display in your unfortunate situation. No man possesses more strength of mind than you do, under the pressure of misfortune *."

Mirabeau had, moreover, profited by the good advice she had given him.

"Employ, my dearest angel, that magic which you possess to such a degree when you wish to enchant any one †."

After several months spent in various occupations, Mirabeau inspired the commandant Dallègre with feelings of regard which the latter expressed with great warmth.

"Although," as he said, "his regard for the Count had exposed him to much annoyance ‡," the kind-hearted commandant advocated his prisoner's cause.

"The whole province is aware, Marquis, of your decision that the Count of Mirabeau's release shall depend upon my report of his good conduct. It will therefore be sufficient for me to make my profession of faith, since that is to procure his release. I am persuaded that this document will produce a strong effect upon the heart of the 'Friend of men,' who has himself

* Letter from the Countess of Mirabeau to her husband, dated October 24th 1774.

† Letter from the Countess of Mirabeau to her husband, dated September 20th 1774.

‡ Letter from M. Dallègre to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 19th 1775.

given such excellent lessons of humanity. The boon I solicit is in favour of a son, who by his resignation to your will, deserves the love of a respectable father, venerated by the whole of Europe.

" Receive then the most authentic attestation, that since the imprisonment of the Count of Mirabeau in the castle of If, he has never given the slightest cause of complaint to any one. His conduct has always been perfectly correct. He has submitted with admirable mildness, to the means I adopted to put his impetuosity to the trial *, and he will carry with him the esteem, friendship, and respect of every body here †."

As we have resolved upon excluding from our history all the scandal we can avoid, without failing in our duty as faithful biographers, we shall not expatiate upon an incident much talked of eight years after, pending the action for a separation which Mirabeau brought against his wife. A young woman, the wife of a sutler, was said to have been seduced by him, and the

* Letter from M. Dallègre to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 24th 1775.

† Letter, already quoted, from the same to the same, dated May 19th 1775. The reader may desire to know the effect which these attestations produced upon the Marquis of Mirabeau's mind. This is what he afterwards said respecting them—

" I well knew what I had to expect when M. Dallègre gave him a certificate *quid potui facere vinæ meæ et non fece.* Believe me, nothing is to be done with such people, except tying a stone to their necks."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February* 1*st* 1779.

story went on to state that he supplied her with the means of robbing her husband and escaping from his authority. These imputations, afterwards repeated from hatred * or ignorance †, were entirely destroyed by the letters of the commandant Dallègre, and by the written confession of the sutler himself, a confession afterwards published, in which he explained the error into which the real thief had led him. There remained, therefore, nothing from all these scandalous proceedings but evidence of a calumnious accusation, and the probability of a momentary connexion, which between a young female sutler, and an officer of five and twenty, alone and in prison, can scarcely be construed into a criminal seduction ‡.

As the letters of the commandant Dallègre prove the condition on which the father himself had made his son's liberty to depend, was thus accomplished. He himself confessed that he was behind "the royal authority §," which, thanks to his all powerful in-

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* Brief and Counsel's Opinion on the Case of the Countess of Mirabeau, Aix, J. B. Mouret, jun. 1783, 162 pp. 4to. pp. 11—18.

† We shall only quote Peuchet, who, employing every means to swell out his book, filled twelve octavo pages with extracts and comments on this scandalous episode, vol. i. p. 122—135.

‡ All this refutation is most incontrovertibly proved in the "Observations on a Defamatory Libel, called 'Brief and Counsel's Opinion in the Case of the Countess of Mirabeau,'" Aix, Joseph David, 1783, 202 pp. See pp. 147—170.

§ Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Mari-

fluence, was the supreme arbiter of his adversary's fate. Mirabeau had been severely tried, and had triumphed over the ordeal. His conduct was irreproachable. With regard to the circumstances which served as a pretence for his imprisonment, his debts were under examination by a firm and prudent relative sent for that express purpose to the spot *. On the other hand, the irregular condemnation obtained against him by the horse-whipped Baron, was about to be brought, by appeal, before those whom Mirabeau termed "his natural judges, the true magistracy †:" that is to say, the ancient parliament, which he had never ceased to regret, and the re-establishment of which would abolish those newly created magistrates, of Chancellor Maupeou's invention, after the bold stroke of policy of 1770; magistrates whom Mirabeau, following the example of all his family, had always considered intruders, and on that account despised and abused ‡. The chances he now had were the more favourable

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gnane, dated October 11th 1774, p. 9. of the "Brief and Counsel's Opinion in the Case of the Countess of Mirabeau." Aix, J. B. Mouret, jun., 1783, 163 pp. 4to.

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 352.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 348.

‡ Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. pp. 327—330. Near the period which now occupies us, Mirabeau thus publicly expressed himself on this subject:—

"Nothing was now wanting but to annihilate this magistracy, or what is still more tyrannical and dangerous, if possible, to degrade

because he was near Marseilles, within reach of part of his family, surrounded by friends, and placed under

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it. This is certainly the proper place to say a word respecting this formidable act of authority.

" At the time of the destruction of the parliaments, at the period of that singular revolution which took place of itself, as it were, and cost the person who appeared the author of it merely the trouble of availing himself of the long slavery of the French people at this time, a great many strangers applauded what was improperly termed the new system. Nor is this to be wondered at.

" They saw in this change nothing but the abolition of the venality of office, (an abuse almost intolerable to the reasonable mind, and to be found only in France,) and the establishment of the self-called ' gratuitous justice ;' a gross delusion with which that despicable minister, Maupeou, wished to lure the nation, although his incapacity and sordid avarice did not allow him long to carry on the deception. But what every enlightened man ought to feel, was the manifest and authentic violation of so much vested property. Now, all kinds of property are inseparably connected together, like links of one chain, and are equally sacred ; he who attacks one is a public enemy, for by that very act he attacks them all.

" Four centuries do not produce four men capable of foreseeing to what extent innovations may go; hence we must infer that changes and new constitutive establishments are always delicate in their operation, and seldom unattended with danger.

" It required no great stretch of foresight to be aware that men, almost all of whom have no interest in the public weal, base enough to plunder their fellow citizens, and to impose upon themselves the frightful duty of deciding upon the life and property of their fellow countrymen, without having acquired any knowledge of the law, having but a brief, precarious, and degraded existence— that men, receiving wages from the court, fawning slaves of the king, or what is still worse, of his chancellor, could not possess the strength and courage which enabled their predecessors to struggle against the arbitrary acts of royal authority, and to instruct the

the authority of a superior, who was his natural bail, and whose protection, as we have just shown, would not be wanting to his unfortunate client.

Whatever might have been the effect of these circumstances, or rather with a view of preventing this effect, Mirabeau's removal was determined upon. The Marquis had already expressed his will upon this head.

"My intention is now to try him in good earnest, and in my own way; he is where he ought to be (at the castle of If,) and shall remain there. Supposing a miracle should take place, and that he could contain himself so far as to induce the commandant to become surety for his good behaviour and repentance," (the miracle had taken place,) "I shall then remove him to some citadel, where he will have to live with one who will put him to the test. Supposing another miracle makes him overcome this second ordeal, I shall have others ready for him, and so on by degrees. This is the only new proof of patience I can grant, in consideration of his being a husband and a father;—this is all *."

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nation by their resistance; that if even they did possess this courage they had neither the right nor the power to exercise it, for the very reason that I discharge my footman when he disobeys me."—*Essay on Despotism*, p. 257. Let it be remembered that Mirabeau was not twenty-three years of age when he wrote these bold lines.

* Unpublished letter, already quoted, from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Marignane, dated October 11th 1774.

Mirabeau was apprised by his wife of his approaching removal.

"I was yesterday entreating your father, as usual; he told me that I should at length be satisfied, and that until your affairs took a turn which would allow of something more being done, you were going to a much more suitable place than the castle of If. In vain did I beg to be informed of the place to which you are to be removed *."

The name of this place was in fact kept secret.

"M. Duveyrier †, commissioned to convey me to my new abode, was charged to conceal from me whither I was going. He asked me to pledge my word that I would not escape: I replied that prisoners of war alone gave their parole, and I had never heard

* Letter from the Countess to the Count of Mirabeau, dated April 27th 1775, p. 20, of "Observations for the Count of Mirabeau."

† It appears that M. Duveyrier, whom we find in our correspondence, sometimes termed Lieutenant of Maréchaussée, sometimes Lieutenant of the Provost (these two situations were certainly compatible), was usually employed on these commissions, for we read further on:—

"Yesterday I saw M. Duveyrier, on his return from conducting the Lady Rongelime (Madame de Cabris) to her convent, at Sisteron."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 1st* 1778.

"M. Duveyrier, who is an honest gentleman, must know how to appreciate this race, for it was he who conducted the madman to the fortress of Joux."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 10th* 1778.

that state prisoners were required to give theirs. I desired to see the orders; he showed them to me, and I learnt that I was going to be banished among the bears of Mount Jura. The neighbourhood of Switzerland thus appeared to me your only motive. I resisted my repugnance and presentiments, and quietly followed my conductor, who was unprovided with any escort. I had pistols about me, he had none. In this manner, I crossed the whole kingdom. You know the account he gave of my conduct, and you see I was resolved to endeavour once more to move you by my resignation *."

A letter from the Marquis informs us that Mirabeau had reached his journey's end.

"My madman has arrived at Pontarlier, and is in the hands of the Count of Saint-Mauris, a man of quality (those are the only proper people to deal with), with whose letters I am perfectly satisfied †."

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* Paper addressed by Mirabeau to his father. See letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 352.

"I arrived voluntarily, and without an escort, at the Castle of Joux."—*First Brief and Counsel's Opinion on the Case of the Count of Mirabeau against the Marquis of Monnier*, p. 2 of the 12mo edition. This twice repeated assertion is confirmed by the following passage found in a letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 31st 1782.

"It is true that M. Duveyrier was alone, and he told me that your son had opportunities of escaping."

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 29th 1775.

We have just stated what Mirabeau himself terms his resignation; a very remarkable proof undoubtedly of his sense of the errors he had committed, and of the sway exercised by a good heart over the most impetuous temper, and the most independent mind that ever existed *. This proof is the more striking because he was perfectly conscious of his true situation, and of his rights as a man, a husband, and a father. He felt the disproportion between the fault and the punishment. Indeed, he thus expressed himself at a later period—

"For after all, why was I confined in a fortress? I was certainly no longer a child: I began to know my language, and to appreciate the value of both words and things. I did not, I could not deem myself a criminal †."

The Bailli himself, who, not having seen the prisoner for two years, was more than ever under the spell of his brother's influence, looking up to this brother as to an oracle, wrote to him in the following terms—

"Have a care. People persist in thinking you rather harsh towards your family. Your son, in the eyes

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* This is the same man who said of himself—

"If he knew me he would be aware that I am never loud in my anger. I would knock down a wall, or bite red-hot cannon balls, but I utter no cries."—*Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes*, vol. iii. p. 450.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol.

of the public, appears guilty only of having contracted debts; and to say the truth, the youth of the present day have taken a singular turn in this respect. If every young man who has debts were to be locked up, we should see none but old dotards in the streets *."

The only direct answer we find to this, is the following sentence—

"Be assured that he is preparing his own halter; he will soon come to close confinement, and then I shall be served as I desire †."

With regard to Mirabeau, his power of discriminating between justice and injustice, and his hatred of arbitrary acts, had already appeared in his "Essay on Despotism," a work he wrote during his exile at Manosque. But however strong the sway of his fiery nature and towering genius, and however great his despondency, arising from the want of feeling evinced by part of his family, and the desertion of him by the remainder, including his young wife, of whose want of affection and her abandonment of him we shall have occasion to speak hereafter, Mirabeau well knew how to guard against himself. He resolved to pursue that silent obedience, that respectful resignation, of which we are bound to multiply the proofs

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated the 23rd of May 1775.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 23rd 1775.

(certainly very unexpected) on coming to that period of our narrative when the events occurred which deprived him for ever of peace, happiness, and the fair fame of private life; events which would not have taken place had some indulgence been shown to his repentance and submission.

Not daring to express his contrition to his father, who, according to custom, had ordered that he should hold no correspondence with him, he wrote to his uncle in the following terms—

"If I knew one who had a better heart than yourself, who was more affectionate towards his family, and possessed stronger and sounder judgment, I would apply to that privileged being, and entreat him to ask my father when he intends to put an end to the really deplorable condition in which I have remained for such a length of time. I would say to him—Freedom is a natural right; can I have forfeited it? The same offence ought not to be punished twice. It is certainly not on account of ruinous expenses that I am undergoing so many humiliations, and feel so much remorse, or that, imprisoned in a fortress, I have been deprived of my liberty for more than a year. It is for an affair, perhaps imprudent in form*, but correct in fact, which I shall never disavow, and which would be condemned by no tribunal in the world. On account of

* The quarrel with Baron Villeneuve Moans.

this unfortunate business was I arrested. But must not so protracted an imprisonment persuade the public that I have been guilty of the most grievous faults,—perhaps the most dishonourable actions. What more have I done than I have stated? Let me be informed.

"To whom, my dear uncle, am I to address this language? Am I to abandon the hope of seeing my inconsiderate conduct forgotten?—of transmitting to my son a name that shall not have lost, through my errors, the respect it has derived from yourself and my father? Must I for ever renounce the career in which my own conduct and exertions, with the assistance of your advice, might give me the means of being one day useful and influential in my turn? Times are regenerating, and ambition is now allowable. Permit me to ask you if you believe that the emulation which fires me can be absolutely sterile, and that your nephew, in his seven-and-twentieth year, is incapable of any good? No, my kind uncle, you do not believe it. Raise me up, then; condescend to raise me up. Save me from the effects of the dreadful ferment I am now in, which might destroy in me the fruit of my reflections and of the trials my misfortunes have made me undergo. Believe me, there are men who require to be occupied, and I am one. That constitutional activity which can achieve everything, and without which nothing can be done, becomes turbulent, and ultimately dangerous,

when it has no object to act upon, and is suffered to remain unemployed.

"Whatever my father's intentions may be—whether he desires to assist or to crush my ambition, do, at least, entreat him to restore me to liberty. He surely cannot be desirous of driving me to frenzy or madness. I feel my health giving way; my heated brain throbs more violently through the very efforts I make to calm it. In the course of a single month the accumulated snow will have buried me in a country destitute of all moral resources. This is a cruel prospect. My situation is painful and distressing; it will exceed my strength; and you will then regret, but too late, a nephew, now only desirous of living for your satisfaction, and for the interests of his family, his name, and his country *."

This appeal was undoubtedly deserving of a reply, but the Bailli, the slave of his brother, would not have dared to write one.

"What do you wish me to do with it? It is for you to know how to act, and what to think; for my part, I will not reply, unless you approve of my doing so, and tell me what I am to say †."

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* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his uncle, the Bailli, dated August 22nd 1775, from the Fortress of Joux.

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 30th 1775.

An answer was sent, but it was neither the uncle who wrote it, nor the nephew who received it.

"I have informed the Count of Saint-Mauris, in the best manner I could, of every thing by my notes and letters. The plan which this fellow, whose apish tricks you are aware of, has now adopted, is, after having ascertained the mild temper of his commandant, to sham illness, and pretend that his brain is on fire by his detention. As, in several successive letters, I had informed the worthy man of all the circumstances of his prisoner's fortune, I contented myself, this time, with saying, that with regard to his illness, we no longer believed in it, and that, besides, we were not physicians; that with respect to his liberation, if the king were to release him, his creditors would soon detain him in a much less commodious manner; that when I saved him by means of letters of exile, it looked like a punishment; that from the little I have hastily read in his letter which you sent me, it would now only be tying the hands of justice, a thing which I will not ask, and cannot obtain *."

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 7th 1775. The Bailli afterwards reproached himself for his timid reserve; and we find that he wrote to his brother as follows:—

"You must now see that you were wrong in taking him away from the Castle of If, where you ought merely to have had him confined more closely, and got M. Dallègre well reprimanded."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated January 22nd* 1779.

Thus, the complaints of the prisoner were not even read; and, accustomed as we are to find in the papers from which we collect our history, a monotonous repetition of the same prejudices, the same projects or acts of rigour, we should nevertheless feel surprised at such persevering cruelty, did not a letter, written at that period, reveal to us the new motive for treating Mirabeau with increased severity. His mother, at this time, followed up with great activity the action she had commenced as early as the year 1772, and judicially demanded her liberty, which, during ten years, had been circumscribed, together with the enjoyment of part of her own fortune. The Marquis, who concealed nothing from his brother, wrote to him thus:—

"This wicked and malicious woman has succeeded in forwarding a letter to her son, although he is under accusation, both royal and civil. But what is to be done? It is impossible to unmarry oneself, or to become again childless.

"If one of them was at the Salpetrière, and the other at the foot of the scaffold, they would not be unchristened for all that. You see I am interested in continuing the confinement of the rascal, lest he should come and support his mother *."

* Unpublished letters of the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 3rd and 10th 1776. This odious calculation that entered the conscience of the Marquis, was founded upon a suppo-

This act, the result of the most heartless selfishness, necessarily led to irreparable consequences for Mirabeau. These consequences were of such a nature, that we have not been able to defend ourselves against a painful hesitation, when about to give an account of them.

In fact, whatever may have been, up to the present period of our narrative, the vicissitudes of his eventful life, we have shown that all these family persecutions, these banishments and imprisonments, never had any other cause than some of the youthful follies which generally remain concealed in the secret of private life, such as debts, duels, and a few love passages.

This disparity between the faults and the punishment has certainly afforded a useful resource to the biographer, whose intention, openly avowed, because it is honest and sacred, is to show, by Mirabeau's private life, how much a character, continually unappreciated, and always thwarted, must be replete with native goodness, to have withstood with such constancy the harshest and most unjust treatment. And we may ask, must not Mirabeau, with his energy of character, have

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sition which, though very natural, was not correct. We find by letters, in other respects worthy of oblivion, from the Marchioness of Mirabeau, that she reproached her son with bitterness, and even with violence, for the attempts he made to bring about a reconciliation.

been at the same time a man of the best feelings, not to have become the most vicious and wicked *?

We now come to events of a far different nature. Hitherto Mirabeau had transgressed only against family discipline, but had wronged nobody except imprudent and covetous creditors. His only business with the magistrates had been the consequence of some obscure quarrels. We now find him committing a truly culpable act, outraging public morals by the scandal of his conduct, endangering the peace of three highly respectable families, plunging an impassioned female, hitherto innocent and virtuous, if not happy, into a career of error, which ended in dishonour and suicide, though in the latter, it is true, she was urged on by another fatal passion. In a word, we shall see Mirabeau "ruin himself," as, two years later, the author of his ruin expressed it, in the extraordinary sentence we here transcribe:—

"I do not reproach myself with any thing, I assure you, in his removal from the castle of If to that of Joux†. How can I feel regret at having made him pursue his career? My purse feels it; that alone suffers but

* Mirabeau renders the same testimony to his own character. "Few men perhaps have made more efforts to conquer their own disposition than I have, who am full of faults, but might have even more, considering the barbarous and mistaken conduct of my father."

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 19th 1777.

reproaches not *. Had he remained at the castle of If, with his testimonials obtained from that fool Dallègre, he would still be there, complaining of injustice, and would not have been able to run to ruin, as he has done, which circumstance has proved the salvation of his family †."

Would to heaven that, in the existence of these facts, the biographer were allowed to remain silent, not only on account of the person whose life he writes, but also to avoid awakening painful recollections, and adding to so many events injurious to morality without serving its interests, an episode, which, instead of remaining buried among a great number of anecdotes that excite only a momentary curiosity, is written in the page of history on account of the notoriety acquired by the individual principally concerned in this unfortunate business.

But this cannot be allowed. The biographer cannot pass in silence over facts which have been revealed by the publication of a number of judicial statements, and above all by the immense publicity given to the Letters written from the Donjon of Vincennes; a publicity caused by Manuel, the Procurator of the Commune, who basely speculated upon the originals deposited in the police office, and in his haste to enjoy

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 12th 1777.

† Unpublished letter, already quoted, from the same to the same, dated October 19th 1777.

the fruits of a bad action, did not give himself the trouble to strike out a number of scandalous and useless details. He added, on the contrary, numerous interpolations, as we shall shortly prove, and thus left Mirabeau's friends divided between the inconsolable grief of an exposure tarnishing his memory, and the satisfaction of seeing a publication in which the goodness of his heart and the firmness of his principles are not less conspicuous, than the astonishing variety of his acquirements, the rich fluency of his style, and the vigour of his genius.

That which the biographer must reveal, he will do without reserve. It is then with the greatest candour, though with the most profound regret, that we state all that has come to our knowledge respecting Mirabeau's passion for the ardent and unfortunate Sophie. Anxious however to circumscribe, as much as possible, an account of so delicate a nature, we shall not follow the example of a certain writer, who has taken pleasure in swelling out the account to three hundred pages, copied from printed books *. We give the exact, but the concise truth, supported by evidence; and we admit as such only original, authentic, and contradictory documents, in which the persons introduced, describe themselves.

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* Peuchet, Memoirs sur Mirabeau et son Erotique. Paris. 1824, 4 vols. 8vo.

BOOK V.

On the 25th of May 1775, Mirabeau arrived at the castle of Joux, "that owl's nest enlivened by a few invalids*; that residence, the old walls of which are covered with snow †, and which is even in the finest weather frequently enveloped in clouds broken on the points of the rocks that surround it ‡."

Mirabeau was at first melancholy, and confined himself to his turret; nor did he ever receive any one there, because visiters, disliking the fatigue of a steep road, and the wild and gloomy place to which it led,

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* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 354; and second case in appeal from the judgment, by default, passed by the bailiwick of Pontarlier, 1782, 8vo, p. 45.

† "You know that I met with snow there on the 25th of May." —*Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 362.

‡ Picturesque and Romantic Travels through Ancient France, by MM. Charles Nodier, J. Taylor, and A. Cailleux; Franche-Comté, p. 168. We notice, by the way, that the editors, forgetting Vincennes, say, in their account of the Castle of Joux, p. 170, that "Mirabeau there wrote his letters to Sophie." It is with the same want of reflection that Mirabeau's private life has almost constantly been described even by the most enlightened writers.

"came half way from Portarlier," and Mirabeau "mostly received them in the country *."

The coronation of Louis XVI, solemnised on the 11th of June 1775, led to general festivities. The small town of Pontarlier had theirs. The Count of St. Mauris, the governor, "made himself conspicuous in them," and was anxious "that Mirabeau should witness his glory †." He even wished that the Count might become their historian, for he enjoined him to draw up a statement of the festivities that had there taken place in honour of the coronation. Besides the draught, which is in his own hand-writing, we most likely possess the only copy of that pamphlet (Geneva, 1776) containing fourteen pages in 12mo. With the exception of the first pages, which we shall insert elsewhere, we must confess that this official statement is somewhat insipid, and remarkable neither for the light vivacity and fancy which Mirabeau afterwards evinced, nor the pungent vigour he had recently displayed in his "Treatise on Despotism ‡."

* Case in appeal, already quoted, same page.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 365.

‡ Mirabeau has twice referred to this pamphlet in writings which have been published only since his death. See "Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes," vol. ii. p. 330; and the unpublished letters, published by Vitry, 1806, Lenormand, p. 146. This last extract is taken from the second paper by Mirabeau, on his prosecution at Pontarlier, in appeal from the judgment against him by default, dated March 10th 1777.

As Mirabeau enjoyed a sort of half freedom *, and had been induced to come to Pontarlier, he was of course introduced "to the only family with whom he could form an intimacy †," that of the Marquis of Monnier ‡, the chief, if not the only inhabitant of any note in that small town. The Marquis, who bid him heartily welcome, "liked to hear him relate his misfortunes, would even listen to his faults," and "administered both consolation and advice §."

Claude Francis, Marquis of Monnier, Lord of Courvière, Mamerole, and other places, had been First President of the Chamber of Accounts at Dôle. He had attained a great age, and was a widower. Being exasperated with his only daughter for having married a M. de Valdahou ‖ against his consent, through com-

* "Your father told me that he had not given any orders to deprive you of your liberty, except that he charged the commandant to be answerable for you until further orders."—See p. 29 of the *Observations on behalf of the Count of Mirabeau*, and the Countess's letter, from which this extract is taken.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 156.

‡ He retired to Pontarlier after the suppression of the Court of Accounts of Dôle.

§ First case in appeal, already quoted, p. iv.

‖ If any reliance is to be placed in the Gazettier Cuirassié (1772, p. 68), the judgment obliged the Marquis of Monnier to pay 60,000 francs as his daughter's dower. According to Bachaumont, vol. ii. p. 175, M. de Valdahou had, on the score of seduction, been condemned, in 1764, by the tribunal of first instance, by default, to a twenty years' exile and to the payment of 20,000 francs damages and costs. The Marquis of Monnier entered an appeal *à minima*

pulsion of the law, he, with a view of being revenged on her, married, on the 1st of July 1771, Maria Théresa Richard of Ruffey, daughter of a president of the Chamber of Accounts in Burgundy *. This lady was then little more than eighteen years of age †.

This ill-assorted union could not ensure a young woman's happiness, to which she was however the more entitled, as she had been a stranger to it in the bosom of her austere family, who, to promote the interests of the male children, had made their eldest daughter enter a cloister, and wanted to marry the younger to the illustrious Buffon, then sixty-three years of age ‡. They

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from this sentence, which, notwithstanding his endeavours, was, however, set aside.

* Gilles Germain Richard de Ruffey. See the notice of his works, poetical, on Natural History, Archaiology, and Political Economy, pp. 161—164, of a collection of unpublished letters addressed by sundry illustrious individuals to the Academy of Dijon. Paris, Dijon, 1819, 12mo.

† The marriage took place at Tronchant, near Saint-Jean de Losne, where the family of Ruffey had estates.

‡ Unpublished Dialogues, written by Mirabeau in the Donjon of Vincennes.

"When I was about sixteen years of age (it is Sophie who speaks), they wanted to make me marry Buffon. This project failed, and I soon got reconciled to it, because he wrote that in love there was nothing good for anything but the physical, and the sentiment by which it was accompanied was worthless. Losing the hope of marrying him, I lost my taste for old men." Buffon had kept up some scientific and literary relations with M. de Ruffey, as appears from several letters inserted in the collection just now referred to.

and ultimately gave her up to the Marquis of Monnier, who was still older.

"You tell us," said her mother *, in a letter to her, "that you have never been happy: what prevented you from being so in infancy? Did I not endeavour to anticipate your wishes during the two years you spent with me prior to your marriage? Was ever daughter more cherished and beloved?"

"Mother," replied Sophie, "your recapitulation of my happiness is not altogether correct. It contains some truths, it is true; but what are the joys of a child

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* Unpublished letter from Madame de Ruffey to her daughter, dated March 25th 1779. The numerous letters in our possession written by Madame de Ruffey (Anne Claude de la Foret) prove that she was sensible, witty, virtuous, and so kind a mother that the absurd marriage must be supposed either an error in judgment as regards herself, or an act of conjugal obedience. As Madame de Ruffey was very strict and religious, she must have suffered cruelly from her daughter's errors, and the more so because her enlightened mind must easily have conceived that the origin of those errors was her unfortunate marriage, and the consequent wrongs she had suffered from her family. Madame de Ruffey may have been mistaken concerning the measures taken to arrest the progress of the evil, prevent scandal, and even inflict punishment; but she has not been spoken of as she deserves. If excitement under passion may, we do not say excuse, for that is impossible, but explain the abuse which Mirabeau heaps upon her in his correspondence from Vincennes, nothing, on the other hand, can justify the churlish editor, Manuel, for allowing it to remain, nor the biographer Peuchet for abusing, in his turn, the virtuous and unfortunate mother of Sophie. Vol. i. p. 414.

eight years of age, who is pleased with a few sugar plums and caresses? All I valued of happiness was absorbed by the fear I entertained of having a husband whom I could not love. How is it possible, then, that I have been happy? You were not alone at home. Was I not under perpetual restraint, enjoying nothing, and in constant dread of my father? You tell me that I was very well contented during the first eighteen months of my marriage, and that 'I had expressed as much both to yourself and to my friends in whom I placed still greater confidence.' It is true that I had been longing for a change; and that, being once married, I wished to attach myself to what I called my duties, and persuade myself that I was happy by inducing other people to think me so: but the more I persevered, the heavier became the burthen. The year I remained a solitary slave with the Marquis, and which you term my happiness of eighteen months, was sad, wearisome, and dull. I was without a farthing; I was constantly found fault with for matters concerning the household; I was allowed neither to pay nor to receive visits; the whole of my life was spent in playing at whist, being always the partner of the Marquis. Now, though I lived in retirement, and was not allowed to dance, and hardly to speak to any body, people already talked about me, and the Marquis became more and more fidgetty and jealous, without knowing why*."

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to her mother, dated July 18th 1777.

The habitual presence of a man, who, though not remarkable for a graceful figure, had all the attractions of youth, talent, and misfortune, could not fail to become dangerous to a young woman in whom the passions had hitherto slumbered, when the state of her family, the age and monkish devotions of the husband, and her constant restraint and ennui are taken into consideration. Sophie's candour and feelings left her also without defence, and betrayed her, unknown to herself, into a passion which daily increased.

Though Mirabeau had more experience, he was not less in danger.

"I was most unhappy, and unhappiness increases sensibility. She evinced a liking for me, and displayed charms that always powerfully attract me, namely those of a generous mind and amiable temper. I was looking for some one to console me, and what can do it so sweetly as love? Till then I had only known the intercourse of gallantry, which is but a mere deception in love. Oh! how cold was that feeling compared to the one with which her presence began to inspire me! I possess the qualities and defects of my constitution: if this renders me hasty, and even impetuous, it also kindles a fire in my heart that nourishes unutterable tenderness*, and makes me burn with that sensibility, at once precious and fatal, which is the source

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 357.

of beautiful conceptions, deep impressions, great talents, great success, and, but too often, of great faults and much misery *. I was no longer hurried away by the strong call of nature founded on the delights of the senses; I was not even excited by a wish to please a judge of exquisite taste: my feelings were too much engaged to harbour self-love. I paid but little attention to propriety, to uniformity of taste, to my want of an intimate companion, of a woman in whom I might confide, and over whom we have more control than she has over us. More powerful attractions had shaken my heart: I found a woman who, far different from myself, has all the virtues of her constitution, and none of its defects. She is gentle, bnt neither indifferent nor careless, as most gentle natures are. She is tender-hearted, but not pliant; benevolent, but her benevolence excludes neither discernment nor firmness. Alas! all her good qualities are her own, all her defects mine. I met with this adorable woman, who was formed for love; I studied her under all circumstances, and too profoundly, for this sweet contemplation kept me too long. I knew her very soul, formed by nature in a moment of magnificence; and she concentrated the scattered rays of my ardent sensibility †."

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated April 19th 1779.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. pp. 357—359; and vol. ii. pp. 75, 76.

"Notwithstanding Sophie's perfections, her graces, her beautiful complexion, her sweet and voluptuous countenance, her flashes of wit, at once so happy and so natural, which come like lightning, and strike the more as they are least expected, her conversation that penetrated the soul*," Mirabeau resisted the excitement of his heart and senses. "When I reflected, I was troubled; for I was dreadfully afraid of love†. If to have been unable to resist so powerful a seduction be a crime, it was not an intentional one. I at first beheld with dread the internal trouble which agitated her bosom; and I strove to resist the temptation‡."

This assertion, inserted in a justification addressed to the Marquis of Mirabeau, through the kind offices of some persons in authority, might for that very reason be called in question; but we are able to corroborate it with unexceptionable evidence. The same is to be found in a copy of the "Dialogues," which Mirabeau so often mentions, in his letters from the Donjon of Vincennes §, and which he had written for the pleasure of recalling to his mind and to that of Sophie the commencement of their intimacy, the tranquillity and freedom of which were of such short duration. It is true,

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. pp. 357, 358. 469; and vol. ii. pp. 75, 76.

† The same, vol. i. p. 123.

‡ The same, vol. i. p. 359.

§ The same, vol. i. pp. 44, 110, 116; vol. ii. p. 106; vol. iii. pp. 514, 231, 248; vol. iv. p. 434.

he was seen at her house from the commencement of June, 1775; but he soon withdrew into voluntary exile. She upbraids him, in the 'Dialogues,' for having avoided society "for several months," though the Marquis of Monnier had repeatedly urged him to come to his house. She attributes this resistance to an attachment for a certain young Belinda, a coquette, in rather humble circumstances. Mirabeau acknowledges it, by confessing that he used those means to dispel and to conquer a more serious attachment, and that his attentions to Belinda did not affect his heart, being merely a freak of the imagination. He adds: "I endeavoured to form for myself a shield of duty. I even mentioned my wife. I felt that this restraint became necessary, as my respect for public opinion might prove some check to me*. I wrote a very strong letter to my wife; it was most pressing, and was full of the eloquence with which the subject inspired me at the time, to prevail upon her to share my fate, as prescribed by all laws, divine and human. I received a few cold lines in reply, in which she gently insinuated that I had lost my senses. * * * * * You refused me her who bore my name, and I yielded to love, whose philtres had intoxicated me. I yielded to my sensibility because I was unable to escape from it†."

* Justification, dated March 1st 1778, in the Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 359.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 367; and vol. iii. p. 391.

This step surely proves that Mirabeau was in earnest, and wished to subdue "that heart of his, so gentle and so good, but too easily inflamed*." He would have been saved had his motives been understood; though this does not justify his subsequent aberrations. But whilst we condemn Mirabeau, we must also pity him.

A biographer of the name of Peuchet, and we are quite at a loss to guess why and upon what grounds, expresses some doubt respecting the truth of this account which Mirabeau gave of his repeated endeavours to guard himself against an attachment the impetuosity of which he foresaw. This writer, in accordance with his custom of never proving any thing, opposes mere conjecture to a fact, which, on account of its being a palliation if not a justification of Mirabeau's fault, ought to have been admitted by a conscientious biographer; especially as it could not be fairly rejected, except on conclusive evidence.

We do not assert any thing without such evidence, and we are about to prove peremptorily, that the foolish act (we shall soon have a right to call it heroic) that embittered the remainder of Mirabeau's life, and sullies, in some degree, his memory, should not be imputed to his precipitation and rashness, but to the pusillanimous selfishness of his wife, the cruelty of his father, the indifference of the public authorities, and the

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 162.

blind self-denial which was from that time imposed upon this unhappy man.

We shall prove by and by what measures he took with his superiors. We shall transcribe a letter, never published, which he wrote to the minister to obtain a military appointment, in order to withdraw himself from the sway of an attachment that might still be subdued, and withdraw in time from the presence of a lady to whom he was not yet obliged to devote himself at all risks, as the moment had not yet arrived when she lost all regard for her reputation, station, rank, fortune, peace of mind, and happiness, and forced Mirabeau to accept the sacrifice of all. For the present, we merely lay some stress on his vain applications to his family. We are sorry that we cannot insert the letter in which, in despair, he supplicates the Countess of Mirabeau. But we affirm that Madame du Saillant had a perfect recollection of it; that her endeavours were useless at the time to prevail upon her sister-in-law to accede to a reconciliation, that had become so necessary; and that she could not even obtain a sight of the letter, as is proved by what Mirabeau wrote to her five years later.

" The Countess of Mirabeau has not felt inclined to show you, and is not unlikely to withhold the letter which I wrote to her from Pontarlier, previously to my flight, and before I was intoxicated with all the philtres of love. I really do not know what is meant by 'a threatening note.' It was a letter of eight pages, and

cannot therefore be styled a note. If at my death I am summoned to appear before the sublime Spirit which presides over nature, this will be my answer: 'I am covered with dreadful stains, and thou, great God, alone knowest whether I should have been as guilty as I am, if that letter had been properly answered*!"

We find the point in dispute doubly confirmed by the following passages in two letters:—

"Besides, your son earnestly demanded his wife; she was not disposed to join him; and this palliates his wrongs towards her†."

"When morality existed, a wife, who had a full sense of her duty, would have agreed to become his fellow-prisoner to the end; and she ought to have done so. I am not quite sure whether this young woman, so much in danger for the future, would not have pursued the wiser course by making him her own, by some striking favour, so as entirely to confound him if he ventured to complain‡."

If the fact had not been true, Mirabeau would never have been so incautious as to mention it afterwards

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madame du Saillant, dated October 25th 1780. See likewise the correspondence from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 356. We give a fac simile of this fragment.

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 30th 1782.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 20th 1779.

in his energetic defence, made before the Parliament of Provence*, during the proceedings that took place there; for had the adverse parties been able, they would not in their animosity have failed to give him one of those denials that kept pace with their insults and calumnies.

The fatal intimacy between Mirabeau and Sophie soon increased; chance brought it to a sudden denouement.

Sophie had long since contracted a friendship with a young lady, mentioned in the correspondence from the Donjon of Vincennes, under the names of Julie Saint B., and Saint Belin†. This lady had inspired a gentleman of her own country with a deep attachment‡. A certain conformity of situation, and a want of mutual confidence and assistance, brought Sophie and Julie into close intimacy. They rendered each other every service, and by each other's assistance they corresponded with their lovers. But a misunderstanding soon arose between them; for, either from jealousy in friendship, or from vexation at not

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* See especially p. 35 of the "Observations by the Count of Mirabeau on a certain Part of his Law-suit." Aix, A. Adibert, 1783.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. pp. 29, 30, 37, 64: vol. ii. p. 241. Madame de Saint Belin was a Canoness of Salles, at Viteaux, in Burgundy.

‡ M. de Grandchamps, lieutenant of cavalry in the regiment of Auxonne.

having been successful in some attempts at coquetry, Julie tried to promote a quarrel between Sophie and Mirabeau. Sophie, on something being said against Mirabeau, warmly took his part; and this occasioned a direct breach between the ladies. We cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of giving the Marchioness of Monnier's explanation of it, as it makes her generous confidence and tender devotedness appear in an interesting light.

" My conduct, Sir, must needs have appeared strange to you, but I appreciate the esteem with which you have favoured me, and which, being anxious to retain it, I am willing to justify. You are aware that no woman can well love another more than I loved Julie; but one inclination does not destroy another. Through some gossip's story, which I am at a loss to comprehend, Madame de Saint Belin wrote me a letter full of invectives against Gabriel; she even assured me that she despised him. Now, Sir, whoever despises Gabriel must despise Sophie, as she loves him. I replied, therefore, that my lover and I required the approbation of no other person but ourselves; and that I should take no notice of what she was pleased to style ' his atrocities.' Upon this, she wrote to me again, and told me things which even the animosity of an enemy would not have invented. She nevertheless knew my heart and my love for Gabriel; or, let me rather say, she knew

not my love. Even he who inspires it knows it but partially. I felt even more indignant at the second letter than I had been at the first. I sent her back her portrait, on which I had set great value, informing her at the same time that I should write to her no more. Do not therefore attempt to reconcile us, it will be of no use: fail not to tell her so, and that I am bound to avenge Gabriel*."

We may infer from the date of this letter, and from the high state of excitement it betrays, that this determination to "avenge Gabriel" contributed to bring about the event which, in ten days from the date of this letter, namely, on the 13th of December 1775, put an end to Sophie's hesitation and resistance, to which Mirabeau so frequently alludes after he had stated the fact in a separate note†.

The Marquis of Monnier, with his experience, was sixty-five, and in love notwithstanding his years, could not but have taken notice of Mirabeau's attentions, and must have had some presentiment of what it would naturally lead to. We shall repeat the numerous conjectures made in the correspondence from Vincennes respecting the cause of his long silence, which is supposed to be disgraceful and even odious; but it is certain, that he never now of his

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to M. de Grandchamps, dated December 3rd 1775.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 351.

own accord showed any symptoms of jealousy, which, as we have already stated, he had previously evinced without cause. Be this, however, as it may, his confidence, whether real or assumed, was soon put to the test by the warnings and reports that reached him from all quarters.

Mirabeau principally accuses the Count of Saint-Mauris, whom he taxes with having entertained personal pretensions with regard to Sophie, which had been coldly repressed.

"I was at least forty or forty-five years younger than Saint-Mauris, and if I was nearly as ugly as himself, I was a more reputable man *. He soon discovered the good understanding that existed between Madame de Monnier and myself. His dark looks proclaimed his resentment, and it soon found vent in epigrams. He wanted to excite against Madame de Monnier the rumours of the town, also the officiousness of the priests and other authors of anonymous letters †."

We shall soon show the hatred of those enemies supported by other persecutors in whom Sophie should have found natural protectors. The Count of Saint-Mauris was however not satisfied: ever since the end of December he had resolved to put Mirabeau under closer confinement. He found two pretences for this severity: the announcement that a bale had arrived

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 356.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 361.

containing copies of Mirabeau's "Treatise on Despotism," published at Neufchatel, and the discovery of a promissory note, signed by Mirabeau, whose income, through his father's covetousness, had been reduced to a pension of 1200 francs a year, and who had been compelled to borrow that he might exchange his light clothes of Provence for others more suited to the temperature of the castle of Joux, and for other expenses.

"He (Saint-Mauris) knew very well that I could not live here upon a hundred francs a month, as I was travelling and hunting through the country to get materials for works which he had himself asked me for; and I was often obliged to buy books *."

This second pretence for persecution, so terrible in its consequences, might easily have been foregone by the Count of Saint Mauris, but for the fatality which drew the lovers into perdition.

"The other day I was perusing your statement †, and I perceived that the debt which was the beginning of our misfortunes at Pontarlier might have been easily paid. You had only to return the bills to Fauche ‡; I would then have paid the surplus and your other

* Letter from Mirabeau to his father, dated January 18th 1776, inserted in the Second Brief and Counsel's Opinion on the Appeal from the Judgment at Pontarlier, Justificative Documents, p. 4.

† The paper dated March 1st 1778, to which we have many times alluded.

‡ Bookseller at Neufchatel.

debts; it would have been a mere trifle. I cannot forgive myself for not having thought of it at the time; but it so happened, because you cannot bring your mind to make the least request, not even to me, and because I likewise carry this folly so far as to feel as much ashamed when I offer as when I ask. I am afraid to ask favours, and dare not even pay people when the sums are but small, or when the individuals happen to be well dressed or are known to me *."

We give this extract merely because it may have appeared twenty times in print that the abduction of the Marchioness of Monnier had led to "immense spoliation," an assertion both false and monstrous, and to which we shall again recur at the proper time.

The two pretences of which the Count of Saint Mauris took advantage were really insignificant. With regard to the "Treatise on Despotism," the order, or the caution of Albert, the lieutenant-general of police, did not allow him even to mention Mirabeau †.

The bill, on the other hand, which, it must be acknowledged, was irregularly signed under the restraint of a *Lettre de Cachet*, was not yet due, and Mirabeau

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* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 20th 1780.

† Unpublished letter from the Marchioness of Mirabeau to her son, and to M. Michaud, Procureur du Roi at Pontarlier, dated December 17th 1776.

had ample means of paying it with the amount he was about to receive for a work he had already completed.

Notwithstanding all this, Saint-Mauris ordered him to return to the fortress of Joux *.

" I will obey," answered Mirabeau, " though my father, see here his letter, relied on your complaisance for permission to remain at Pontarlier, which he had not been able to obtain from the minister †."

The commandant did not relent; he wrote in violent terms ‡ to the Marquis of Mirabeau, as inexorable as himself, whose reply soon authorised fresh severity.

Mirabeau, now become desperate, had recourse to flight §, and foreseeing his fate, took leave of Saint-Mauris, on the 16th of January 1776, in the following terms —

" I fly from an authority which has become tyrannical, and has laid me more snares than I could ever

* Letter from Mirabeau to M. de Saint-Mauris, dated December 30th 1776. See same Justificative Documents, p. 6.

† The same letter from Mirabeau to M. de Saint-Mauris, dated December 30th 1776. See the same Justificative Documents, p. 7.

‡ Unpublished letter from Michaud to the Marchioness of Mirabeau, dated December 24th 1776. See also Second Justificative Document, p. 7.

§ We find in the First Brief on behalf of the Count of Mirabeau against the Marquis of Monnier, p. 3 of the 12mo edition, a circumstance mentioned nowhere else.

" I made my escape at the close of a ball given on my account; for the Marquis of Monnier wished that his wife should pay me this compliment, in consequence of my being king on Twelfth Night."

This fact is also mentioned in the Second Brief, p. 118.

have to fear from an honourable man. You may perhaps feel some remorse, when you reflect that you have done all in your power to ruin a young man of whom some hopes were entertained, and to whom you cannot impute any thing dishonourable; — for what business had you to care for a bill, which I did not owe till it became due? Have you any other subject of complaint? If so, state it; if not, you must admit that it was perfidious to set my father against me, so as to render all reconciliation hopeless, and to request my removal, at the very time you were shaking me by the hand and embracing me. If my stay in this part of the country hurts your vanity, if to me you impute the disdain of a respectable woman whom you have cruelly reviled, because you have not been able to seduce her, did it become you to yield to such motives, when you might have saved a gentleman, a man, and an unhappy fellow-creature? You might have got rid of me in an honourable manner by reconciling me to my father; and this was your duty. You can never repair the injury you have done me; but you may prevent its increase by abstaining from writing falsehoods to the minister. Do your worst. In your innermost soul you are as much disturbed as irritated at my frankness; but I pay very dearly for the power of writing to you thus *."

* Second Brief for Counsel's Opinion on the Appeal from the Sentence at Pontarlier, p. 42, and Justificative Documents, p. 1.

This direct reproach, this letter written to the Count of Saint-Mauris himself, a copy of which was also sent to the Marquis of Monnier *, gives a certainty to the base cause of the rival commandant's persecutions, which could not have proceeded from the mere justification addressed by Mirabeau to his father, two years subsequently, during Saint-Mauris's absence, and without his knowledge †. From this time, another copy, giving to the Marquis of Mirabeau those explanations which extenuated his son's errors, should have warned him of the exaggeration of malignant reports, and the danger of over-strained severity. Putting kindness out of the question, if he had but behaved towards his son as he did towards every other person, that is to say, with prudence and justice, he would by mild measures. and a prompt change of scene, have saved Mirabeau from the consequences of a fault which soon became irreparable, and to the commission of which he was driven as much by circumstances as by the violence of his own passions.

After such a declaration addressed to Saint-Mauris who was "both an intractable man and an irritated

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* Second Brief for Counsel's Opinion on the Appeal from the Sentence at Pontarlier. See the end of the Justificative Documents, p. 1.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol i. p. 355, 361, 364.

rival *," Mirabeau could not return to the fortress of Joux. He wrote to his mother as follows :—

" I am informed by some friends at Pontarlier, that my father, who had apprised M. de Saint-Mauris of my return to the castle of Joux, begged the latter to put me ' in a healthy and dry place of confinement, but securely bolted and barred †, and to take particular care that I did not write to, or hold communication with any one.' In compliance with my father's wish, M. de Saint-Mauris prepared for me the tower of Grammont, a dungeon famous for its hideous appearance and its dreadful inconvenience ‡. Gracious heaven! is it possible that any one can have thought of replacing me under the custody of that vile Saint-Mauris, who is so evidently and obstinately bent upon my ruin; who called his God to witness that he would never take any steps which might injure me with the minister. He is a monster who looks upon me with the eyes of a vulture, eager to feed upon a corpse §!"

These expressions are no doubt strong; but to give a more correct notion of the indignation with which Saint-Mauris's tyranny inspired Mirabeau, we insert

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* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 366.

† See relative to the same fact, p. 383 of the same volume.

‡ Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 31st 1776.

§ Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated February 26th 1776.

a letter which two months subsequently the latter addressed to the minister *.

"As you have not considered me entitled to the least indulgence, I now merely call upon you for that impulse of common humanity which induces a man to fly to the aid of a drowning fellow-creature. I learn from Paris that I am to return to Joux under the charge of M. de Saint-Mauris. I beg as a favour then that you would order me to be put in irons. You will, by so doing, rescue me from the greatest of misfortunes, and spare a man whom I shall never be able to look upon as the representative of my sovereign; for in my sight he is the most vile and abject of human beings. I should destroy myself, Sir, and involve him in my ruin, were I to continue to have the free use of my hands. Irons will not disgrace me. I am myself the first judge of my own case, and the only one I cannot challenge: more than one citizen, and more than one family are interested in my not returning to the place which you designate as my prison! Pray consider that he who makes avowals to the king's minister such as I have now the honour of addressing to you, is a man who fears nothing but his own conscience †."

Will any one, after the perusal of this terrible declaration, be surprised that Mirabeau had already, on

* The immortal Malesherbes.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Malesherbes, dated May 4th 1776.

the 16th of January, escaped from the fortress of Joux? His first excitement drove him to Switzerland *, but reflection, and, we must own, passion soon brought him back to Pontarlier. He afterwards boldly avowed this second motive.

" I resolved to conceal myself at Pontarlier, and remain near the Marchioness of Monnier. I resigned myself to the most dismal, and at the same time the most dangerous existence, that I might not quit my friend. If I had not loved her, who could have detained me? Eighteen months of imprisonment had exhausted my patience. I was on the frontier, sure of finding in foreign countries, provided I went alone, those advantages which my youth, my birth, and my sword might have won for me. For what I cared, the thunder might have pealed at a distance, I should not have been afraid of its reaching me, and I would not have returned to my country, until I had acquired a right to believe that I had atoned for my faults. All this was clear to me, but to no purpose was I aware of it. Common sense, that discernment which guides a man's reason, is but a poor security for the prudence of his conduct. Understanding makes things clear to the mind; but prevailing passion associates itself with understanding

* First Brief for Counsel's Opinion on the Case of the Count of Mirabeau against the Marquis of Monnier, p. 4, of the 8vo edition, Second Brief, p. 49.

to make us act, and the latter is always stronger than its companion. I therefore remained, but my stay was altogether a sacrifice to affection; and, I repeat it, such faults have a strong claim upon the indulgence and commiseration of persons endowed with feeling *."

In another place he says:—

"Alas! I fully comprehend all the logic of the morality which you preach to me so much at your ease, in the absence of the passion that devoured me, but which you have not felt, and therefore do not understand! Bear, however, in mind, that my happiness had scarcely begun, when some cruel persons tore it from me. Learn to know your brother, if you are able; and then ask yourself, whether, whilst I was under the infatuation of a first love, a fortnight's possession clandestinely obtained and attended with many crosses, could satiate my heart and my senses, both alike insatiable †!"

Notwithstanding the strength of this infatuation, Mirabeau was still in some measure able to resist it, for he made a serious attempt to escape from it. The following letter, which he wrote the day before his escape, to the Count of Saint-Germain ‡, then war minister, is a proof of this.

"Your reputation inspires me with sufficient con-

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 369, 370.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madame du Saillant, dated September 15th 1780.

‡ He retired from office in September 1777, and died in 1778.

fidence to place myself under your protection, and your office makes my doing so both a duty and a necessity."

"I have now, for more than eighteen months past, been detained in fortresses, for an affair in which I behaved as became a man of honour. This affair was regularly pending at law *. A ministerial order deprived me of my liberty at a time when such an order was easily obtained. As a subject, a nobleman, and an officer, I belong to my king. I am a Frenchman. My name is Mirabeau, and I am a captain of dragoons."

"I have long taken patience: my heart felt repugnance at contending with a parent, and the reputation of mine alarmed me. Besides, prospects were continually held out to me that my fortune would change.

"It was about to be cruelly aggravated, and I have withdrawn from persecution. A letter is not well calculated to contain the particulars of my grievances, and to insert them would be tiring your patience.

"I am only anxious to clear myself from the imputations by which I may be aspersed. I will avow my faults, though I will prove to you that they have been exaggerated, and that nobody had a right to form a bad opinion of a young man whose honour and good sense have never been disputed, and who has nothing

* The pretence, as our readers are aware, was the affair with Villeneuve Moans.

to reproach himself with further than having spent more money than was necessary to secure his tranquillity.

" The Baron of Vioménil, and Viscount Harembure knew me in Corsica, where I served under their command. You know better than any other person how much this detached warfare is calculated to show the value of a young officer. Do me the favour to inquire what they think of me.

" I ask to serve the king, in my rank and under any commander whom you may be pleased to designate. I will blindly abide by the opinion they may give of me. Put me to the proof, and be alone my judge. I make bold to beg of you that my father's name and reputation may again rouse your justice, and not inspire you with prejudice against me.

" I have not fled to a foreign land, and I shall not leave my country until I am absolutely forced. But permit me to conceal for a time my place of residence, and await your orders, so as not to be exposed to those which my father may obtain against me. May a heart like yours feel that the fate of a citizen whose safety is at stake, is an object well worth attention; may you, as the king's minister, be pleased to recollect what a man of your own order, who has already obtained some promotion, and may perhaps do good service, has a right to expect from your kindness. Allow me to beg you would have the

goodness to address your commands to my mother, the Marchioness of Mirabeau, at the Dames de la Trinité, Faubourg Saint-Antoine, Paris *."

Having vainly waited for some time, without obtaining any reply, Mirabeau continually addressed useless supplications to his father, who likewise received pressing letters from a clever and prudent man, then performing the duties of Procureur du Roi at Pontarlier †, and very much attached to Mirabeau. The reader may judge of the Marquis's feelings by his reply—

" I have received the letter which you were so good as to write to me under date of the 23rd inst. I cannot but express my thanks for the motive that induced you to take that trouble, and shall reply to it with the candour which it inspires.

" So far as I am able to judge of men and things, if the person in whom you are pleased to take some interest could go to a country where he would not

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to the Count of Saint Germain, dated January 15th 1776.

† Michaud. (See Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 370.) When Mirabeau came forward, in February 1782, to get a sentence by default set aside, this worthy magistrate excused himself from conducting the adverse proceeding, on account of his relationship to the Marquis of Monnier. We shall further show that other magistrates did not entertain the same scruples, especially the Substitut Sombarde, who bore the same degree of relationship. Mirabeau afterwards wrote:—

" He (Michaud) was the more ready to excuse himself as he feels a kind attachment towards me."— *Third Brief for Counsel's Opinion*, &c., p. 8.

stand in his own light, you would do him great wrong to prevent him. I at this moment know of no country to which he is a greater stranger than to France. With a judicial condemnation hanging over his head in his own country, pursued by a host of creditors who have judgments against him, and whom he is unable to pay; refractory to two successive orders from the king, still in force against him (and you are aware of the law of this kingdom respecting the latter point) *, his country, I am sure, affords him but little safety. With

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* Namely, orders of exile; and the Marquis, blinded by animosity, forgot what he had himself written concerning similar orders, not only in his works, which we do not quote, as they are published, but also in his "Domestic Memoirs," designed for the instruction of his family, and in several letters addressed to his brother.

We give a fragment from these Memoirs. It relates to the request made by his steward in Provence, in 1756, for *lettres de cachet* to repress some turbulent and mutinous vassals.

"He induced me to ask for *lettres de cachet* for the imprisonment of those two rogues. This I will never do again, and I regret it though my application was unsuccessful. There are regular tribunals for everything. They have undoubtedly their defects; but we are bound to put up with them, and are not at liberty, if Providence has granted us greater means than she has given to others, to use such means in perverting the regular course of justice. I will not do it again; and I recommend to those who come after me, if they have the patience to read this, never to do it, however plausible their private reasons may be, for it is a great abuse, on account of the consequences."—*Unpublished Domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

We likewise give the following extracts from the Marquis's letters to his brother on this subject. When the Marquis, after his temporary

regard to the protestations which you have been so kind as to communicate, allow me to observe, that they would not be disregarded, if I could rely on any protestations proceeding from him, and if I thought them sincere; but time and numberless opportunities have convinced me that his notions and mine must ever disagree. This opposition has been openly and painfully carried on long enough, when you consider that I tried him till he had reached his twenty-seventh year.

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detention at Vincennes, had to go into exile for a few weeks, at his estate of Bignon, in the midst of his family, and near Paris, he felt much irritated, and thus expresses himself:—

"According to my principles, an order to leave this or that spot does not place a subject in a state of oppression; but exile to such a spot is a real state of imprisonment, from which a man may escape without being criminal."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February* 11*th* 1761.

"I shall apprise M. de Saint Florentin that I desire to be put formally upon my trial, and be at liberty to use my natural right, and perform its duties, giving further notice that I shall be driven to the necessity of demanding it publicly if my request continues to be unattended to."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February* 6*th* 1761.

"I give warning also that I have taken such steps as render it impossible for the Government to prevent the purity of my motives from being known, and my being regularly put upon my trial; that it is contrary to usage and justice in any country, civilized or not to condemn a man unheard, unconfronted, &c. I therefore entreated them to choose the alternative of destroying, or at least banishing, a man whom Europe had honoured with the title of 'the Friend of Men,' or of permitting him the exercise of a natural right."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February* 12*th* 1761.

I then gave him up entirely. This I stated to the minister to whom an offensive memorial had been addressed, before I received your letter, and who very properly lays it to my charge. I answered all questions by telling him, that in future I would not ask him for any thing; that I discarded all fruitless solicitude; that I would now only think of my family, having at length resolved to have nothing more to do with the person in whose favour you have addressed me *. Believe me, Sir, when a man who has been tried by years and misfortune, and has moreover such a reputation that young people of whom he absolutely knows nothing choose him for their arbitrator :—when such a man comes to this determination he must have very sound and coherent reasons for it. At all events, I do not wish to deprive him of the few friends he may still possess. So far am I from wishing him harm, that I even rid him of one of his persecutors. I do not trouble him for any redress, and am till less desirous of reconciliation. This word, which is but seldom exchanged between father and son, much less between morality and vice, and which I do not consider synonymous with mercy, forms no part of my vocabulary. I hope it may one day have a conspicuous place in his. As soon, however, as the name of the place in which he may settle is known to us,

* It will soon be seen whether or not he persisted in this determination.

care shall be taken that he regularly receives the hundred francs a month which justice has directed should be allowed him out of his income. It is true, he might have had monthly what he now receives in the course of a year; and this sum would become his station in life. But he has been pleased to sacrifice his income to litigation; and whenever any one offered to put his affairs in order, he chose to overturn every thing *."

Such a letter could neither convince the mind nor cool the zeal of Michaud, nor did he leave it unanswered. We give his reply.

"I hope you will not consider importunate the further observations which I have the honour of addressing to you. I have too great a regard for you, I place too much reliance upon your kindness, and feel too deeply the duty which friendship imposes on me, to consider as your final answer the letter you have done me the honour of writing to me. I beg that I may be permitted to discuss the several points which it contains. Your son, most assuredly, can have but one danger to fear, that of finding your heart irrecoverably estranged.

"The judgment against him, in consequence of Baron Moans's complaint, is of no importance whatever. It would but ill become me to give you an opinion upon propriety of conduct, for I am sure you

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Procureur du Roi, Michaud, dated January 31st 1776.

do not condemn your son in that affair; but the forms of justice are my profession, and I solemnly declare to you that nothing is more ridiculous nor more unjust than that very judgment, which is sure to fall to the ground the moment you choose to protest against its execution.

"Neither do your son's creditors make me feel any uneasiness on his account. You are his guardian; and though his affairs may be much embarrassed, their adjustment is not beyond your prudence and ability.

"The king's order will never be enforced against the Count of Mirabeau, except at your instance. Allow me to observe that your son cannot yet be considered refractory as regards that order. A prisoner is in custody, his detention is not voluntary; and if he recovers his freedom, he does not disobey: he only makes use of the means which his skill suggests. His safe custody was not left to himself. Besides, the high estimation in which you are held would enable you to arrange with ministers an affair that might be attended with much greater danger than this. Your displeasure then is the only real affliction which stands in your son's way, and if he could but induce you to relent, he would still have an open field before him. I am strangely surprised at what you state respecting a memorial which the Count has addressed to the minister, and the blame of which was laid to you. I made a point of calling upon your son immediately; he showed me a copy of a letter

which he had written to the Count of Saint-Germain, assuring me that he had sent no other.

"I by no means approve of that letter, which was evidently written under momentary excitement and strong anxiety of mind. But permit me to observe that this letter does not contain any charge against you, neither does it show any want of respect, nor any thing that resembles an intention of suing you judicially.

"The Count means to clear himself from the imputations by which he may be aspersed. There can be no doubt that it would have been much better had he not anticipated such imputations, and requested the Minister to intercede with you in his favour. But, at all events this injudicious proceeding on the part of a young man, to whom your dissatisfaction and intended measures of severity had been exaggerated, is not of a nature to justify his ruin, and will not, I should hope, produce it. You will listen, I am sure, to the entreaties of a man, who has no further interest in this affair than to please you, and to ease your heart of an affliction by which it is assuredly oppressed. You will perceive that not to lend a succourable hand to your son at this moment would precipitate his ruin. If he is not relieved, he will fall into the gulf; if he is not restored to your favour, he will have recourse to flight, and you will certainly have cause of regret. Yield, therefore, I entreat you, to your generous feelings; forgive all, and forget a letter which does not state a

single fact, and is already expiated by profound repentance. I trust you will favour me with your last commands *."

We have transcribed this letter, equally remarkable for force and ingenuousness, being desirous that the reader should hear Mirabeau's justification from a third and disinterested party,—a justification which has hitherto been read only in the statements written by Mirabeau himself. Moreover the arguments of a man of truth like Michaud, were so pressing and demonstrative, that they stamped him, as they had done his unfortunate client, with the fault of being too much in the right. The Marquis, more exasperated than ever, made no reply to Michaud. Mirabeau therefore remained in painful perplexity. Wavering betwixt twenty plans abandoned as soon as conceived, he consulted the Marchioness of Mirabeau concerning a rash project which he at length formed.

"If I thought that by remaining quiet I should unmolested, I would be silent, and endeavour to gain a livelihood by my pen. But who will secure me against being arrested? And, in good earnest, I am quite sick of prisons. On the other hand, I have a great aversion to go abroad; it amounts to renouncing one's country, and sending in one's resignation. I neither can nor will do either. I fancy that a bold

* Unpublished letter from the Procureur du Roi, Michaud, to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated February 8th 1776.

stroke, such as suddenly appearing at Court, might be advantageous to me, by making me known to the Count of Saint Germain, on whom I might produce a greater impression in a quarter of an hour's conversation, than by a hundred letters. But he must first be tried on this point, as it would be imprudent wantonly to expose myself to another detention, which I could not end when I chose, as I can do the present*."

Having been dissuaded by his mother, Mirabeau made another attempt to soften his father; but Michaud's last letter, which had been rather too candid and bold, proved an insurmountable obstacle. The Marquis sent Mirabeau a fulminating reply, to which the latter referred when he wrote to his father two years subsequently.

"Your views and intentions have at length become quite clear: your hatred is now exposed without disguise or evasion. You have thrust me from your heart, from my family, and from my country; you wished to dissolve, as much as you were able, the natural and social ties that bound me to France. The curse was explicit, and the more terrible, because you would not even condescend to be angry. Dungeons and chains would not have made such an impression on my mind, nor lacerated my feelings so much. So great was my despair, that it deprived me of all power of reflection.

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated February 10th 1776.

I formed no plan, I came to no resolution. I had still a friend, and one only. My repeated losses greatly enhanced the value of that treasure: I abandoned myself to all the illusions of love, and was myself surprised at the energy of my passion. She alone reconciles me to life *."

We shall abridge as much as possible this part of our narrative. It was known that Mirabeau was concealed in the town of Pontarlier; he was hunted from house to house, and evil reports again disturbed the Marquis of Monnier, by whom they had hitherto been either evaded or contradicted. They incensed him against his unfortunate and guilty wife, who was constantly watched by her own servants. She had to submit to all kinds of humiliation, even to acts of violence, and she ultimately took refuge with her family at Dijon, where she arrived the 25th of January 1776.

The cause of her journey naturally produced a great sensation, and placed her in a painful predicament. Though M. de Ruffey was very virtuous, he was still a severe man. His wife, whose letters, many of which we possess, give us a high opinion of her, was a kind mother, but her morals were as rigid as they were pure. Their bitter and deep sorrow for the past was soon increased by their anxiety about the future.

Mirabeau followed Sophie closely.

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* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 371, 372.

"I was so situated that I was no longer able to do any thing but commit errors*. I know it has been supposed that I had already made up my mind to elope with Madame de Monnier: but really, time, place, and circumstances might have been better chosen! We had not thirty louis d'or between us, and I had not the least doubt of my being closely watched. Can any but a dolt suppose that to pave the way for such an act, I should have sent her from a country which borders on Switzerland, to the interior of the kingdom, and have entrusted her to the care of her mother and family†."

"No sooner had I reached Dijon than Madame de Ruffey discovered me there, and had me arrested, by giving information to the grand provost. At that moment all my thoughts were employed in devising means to prevent rumours that might consummate Madame de Monnier's ruin in the mind of her husband. The gentlemanly conduct of the grand provost (M. de Montherot), a man highly esteemed, inspired me with the hope of inducing him to silence‡. I entreated him to take measures that my

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 375.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 380.

‡ M. de Montherot, M. de Changey, M. Dallègre, the Bailli of Aulan, the Abbé Choquart, Sigrais, and all the superiors and keepers of Mirabeau, with the sole exception of Saint-Mauris, took a very lively interest in his fate.

adventure might remain unknown. He willingly acquiesced, for Madame de Ruffey had not been able to avoid qualifying in some measure her information. He disguised my name, sent his subordinates on a wrong scent, left me at liberty on parole, wrote to the minister in my behalf, even went so far as to send him back his first order which remanded me to Joux, and tried to assuage Madame de Ruffey's displeasure, which had reduced her daughter to despair *."

" I have quieted the head and the heart of my poor friend; but she has been placed under greater restraint. She is locked up, her paper is taken away, spies are set about her person, and there is as vigilant a watch kept as if the house were threatened by robbers. She is treated like a child whose notions and fancies will soon be overcome. This is very foolish, for her mind is as energetic as her fancy is vigorous and fruitful†. I know her disposition well; her nature is gentle but firm. She is not a woman who makes a great stir outwardly, but her heart is a volcano. She will appear calm and tranquil a quarter of an hour before the catastrophe, which will inevitably take place if

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" I send you a copy of the letter which M. de Montherot wrote in my behalf to the Minister. It is written in the strongest terms; but once more my father's influence is triumphant."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated April 16th 1776.*

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 376.

† Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 379.

she is reduced to despair *. Persecution could therefore only irritate her without putting her out of patience. What ought to have been Madame de Ruffey's object? Undoubtedly, to reconcile her daughter to her son-in-law. But if harsh words, and the humiliation of being watched, were sufficient to induce her to fly from her home, it was probable that violent treatment, and an inquisition a thousand times more severe, would not be more patiently endured. Was it by rendering her much more wretched at her father's than she had been with her husband, that they hoped to make her return to her duty? This policy was equally erroneous and unnatural, because, when placed between these two evils, the convent was the natural asylum she would choose; and if her mother reduced her to such extremity, she would become instrumental in spreading reports which it was so much her interest to suppress. Imagine my friend's affliction. My patience was tried, and I sustained hers. I had to suffer every thing, and I engaged her to suffer. She would certainly never have returned to Pontarlier, had I not requested it as a proof of her attachment to me. She

* Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 285. This prediction was but too completely verified twelve years after, as will be seen in the sequel of this work. We shall previously have frequent occasion to prove this part of Sophie's character.

went thither on the 24th of March 1776, and I remained at Dijon *."

Mirabeau escaped from the danger of returning to the fortress of Joux. As soon as Sophie had left for Pontarlier, he surrendered himself prisoner at the castle of Dijon, the commandant of which (M. de Changey †) became his friend and protector. Aided by this excellent man, by M. de Montherot, and by the Marchioness of Mirabeau, the prisoner prosecuted his measures to obtain his entire release. He applied for this purpose to the virtuous Malesherbes. He continued to request that he might at least be allowed to resume his duty in the army. Commissioners were appointed to report upon the subject of his imprisonment ‡. Their report was favourable §; only they were afraid that Mirabeau would, on regain-

* Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 380, and the following.

† Peuchet, inaccurate in everything, calls him M. Grancey, vol. i. pp. 191, 193, 196, 205.

‡ "M. de Montpezat was the reporter, (*Original Letters from Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 255,) and afterwards M. Lemoine de la Chartière, Counsellor in the Court of Aids, Commissioner of the Council."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated April 6th* 1776. We see by a letter dated March 31st, that Mirabeau much regretted M. de Montpezat, "a man deserving of esteem, much respected, and beyond the reach of favour."—*Ibid., March 31st* 1776.

§ "M. de Changey, who really bestows a generous attention to my case, has had a long interview with M. de Montpezat. He cannot possibly be better disposed in my favour, and he told the

ing his freedom, again demand satisfaction from the Baron of Moans. They were, therefore, anxious that this affair, in which judgment had gone by default, should first be settled by a peremptory decree. This being done, he was to recover his liberty immediately. Mirabeau urged that the proceedings should be brought before the Parliament of Dijon, or that he should at least be allowed to come to Paris in safety, where he might offer an explanation on the subject. The Marquis of Mirabeau, on the other hand, demanded the removal of his son to Alsace; the latter used all his powers to resist this demand, convinced as he was that all his future prospects were at stake.

" Do not forget that this is the decisive moment: if my affairs are not terminated at present, I shall be in captivity for years to come. If you do not procure my release, my ruin will be complete. If I again fall under my father's controul, I am a lost man *."

latter summarily, 1st, That it would be better for my interest if I were at Paris instead of being here, and that you ought to ask this of the minister; 2nd, That the whole council is in my favour; 3rd, That my detention cannot be of long duration; 4th, That it is first wished I should be relieved from the decree (Villeneuve Moans) to save me from committing fresh violence; 5th, That the passion imputed to me appeared quite simple; that they wished however to part me from the lady (M. de Changey proved that I was far enough from her)."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated April 23rd* 1776.

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 31st 1776.

When he was informed that a fresh removal was in contemplation, he asked, as he had done before, why they always wished to make him change his quarters, removing him from places where he had made himself known and beloved, to drag him to others where he was unknown and suspected. The idea of being removed vexed him sorely *, but being soon assured of the impossibility of escape from it, and that of avoiding another imprisonment, he would have preferred Pierre-en-Scise †, or Stenay ‡, or the prison of the Abbaye at Paris §.

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* "Another point of your request will be, if you please, that they do not remove me before my affairs have been settled. Removals are humiliating and disagreeable; always new faces, and always publicity. The reasons which might have rendered it objectionable that I should be in Burgundy no longer exist. They have even turned in my favour; for the lady has returned to her husband; and as her family, who reside at this place, have an eye on me which cannot but quiet their apprehensions, I am very desirous to remain here to await quietly the termination of my case."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 22nd* 1776.

† State prison, built on the summit of a rock near the entrance of the city of Lyons. This fortress was pulled down in 1798.

‡ "If it is absolutely necessary that I should leave this town (Dijon), where everybody takes an interest in me, where I am much at liberty, and that you cannot obtain Pierre-en-Scise, ask for Stenay in the three bishoprics. Its commandant is an intimate friend of M. de Montherot, and it is only thirty-six leagues from Paris."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated April 16th* 1776.

§ "I asked that I might be taken to the Abbaye at Paris, as you had thought proper that I should not remain at Dijon."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. de Malesherbes, dated May 3rd* 1776.

In these alternatives of dungeons, another citadel was chosen, namely, that of Dourlens *, and we find it in a letter from the implacable Marquis—

" The order has been given to conduct him thither, ever since the 30th of April last, but he counterfeits illness, and has certificates †. He and the physicians are believed, and he remains ‡."

Mirabeau, constantly foiled in the different measures of safety he attempted to pursue, was dreadfully embarrassed, and did not know what to resolve upon §, when all at once Malesherbes caused it

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* It was the place of detention which Mirabeau most feared.

" Above all things, no Alsace; it is an abominable conspiracy of which I see the drift."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated April 16th* 1776.

† " If the orders come directly I shall keep my bed, which I ought to have done long ago, on account of my incessant want of sleep, and the absolute disorder of my chest, which no longer allows me to speak two words consecutively."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated April 16th* 1776.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 19th 1776. Mirabeau had also been informed of this determination.

" I have been apprised, through an unaccountable indiscretion of Madame de Ruffey, that I am going to be removed to the fortress of Dourlens."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated May 3rd* 1776.

" Nothing will thus be wanting to the anguish and anxiety which the present and the future occasion to a man so constantly, so singularly unfortunate as I am."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated May 24th* 1776.

§ Twenty letters attest it, besides those we have previously cited. It would be superfluous to give extracts.

to be suggested to him that he should go abroad, and try to obtain rank in a foreign service; adding, that the fugitive's affairs were more likely to come to a settlement during his absence. It was further hinted to him that this advice was the last service he could obtain from the minister, who was about to retire from office *.

This strange fact, advanced by Mirabeau †, and which might be supposed to arise from the necessity of his defence, and to be consequently a mere unfounded allegation, is proved by the following passage from a letter in which we immediately recognise the style and character of the Marquis—

"Did not this Malesherbes, with his effusions of philanthropy, and his fine republican feelings, meet my expostulations by saying that it was quite natural that a man should try to obtain his release ‡?"

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* Malesherbes' resignation took place on the 12th of May 1776.

† See, in particular, "Original Letters from Vincennes," vol. i. p. 387.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 1st 1780. Here are other testimonies nearer to the period of the event.

"M. de Malesherbes' retirement comes upon me like a thunderbolt; there now remains nothing more for me to do than to follow his advice."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Sophie, dated May 9th* 1776.

"You know that my escape was advised by M. de Malesherbes, and that it could not hurt M. de Changey, as it was through you that I learnt all this."— *Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated October 19th* 1776.

From this moment, Mirabeau, seeing that nothing could prevent his father's influence from crushing him, had recourse to the step he had so long deferred, and determined to escape *. His parole was almost the only tie which kept him in a place, where we have already stated the sort of *freedom* he enjoyed,—a place which had been assigned to him more as a residence than as a prison, and "where he experienced a kind of reprieve †." His parole was given back to him by M. de Changey, who had become bail for him, undertaken his defence, and rendered him many services. Mirabeau set out on the 25th of May, and travelled to Switzerland under the name of the Count of Beaumont ‡, and

* "I have been obliged to escape, as, even with the most just of ministers, you were unable to procure me my release, and prevent a removal which filled the cup of my despair, and led to all that ensued."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated November 21st* 1776.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Marignane, dated September 5th 1777. Brief and Counsel's Opinion on the Case of the Countess of Mirabeau, p. 32. Aix, J. B. Mouret, 1783, 4to, 162 pp.

‡ Letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 19th 1776. Beaumont was the name (often borne by the junior branches of the family) of an estate belonging to the Marquis of Mirabeau. Our account might be impugned by the presumption of a clandestine escape founded on a note adduced at the end of the collection of Letters from Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 352. We should in that case reply that both the note and our account are correct. It was not M. de Changey whom Mirabeau had to fear, for he was then at Paris supporting the Marchioness of Mirabeau's useless entreaties: it was M. de Montherot. With regard to

took up his abode at the village of Verrières, close to Pontarlier.

Sophie, on her return to that town, did not experience the kind reception and the tranquillity that had been promised.

"Her mother, struck with terror, or rather with madness, at the news of my flight, immediately despatched her son to Pontarlier with directions to take her daughter to the convent *."

This resolution, together with the false measures before adopted, which had reduced a woman excited by a most violent attachment, to the last extremity of despair, have been questioned in some of the Marquis of Mirabeau's letters, in some of the law proceedings, and in certain pretended biographical notices. Madame de Ruffey herself, aware of the injury done by her imprudent severity, endeavoured to deny it.

"Has your husband used you harshly? Too much lenity can alone be imputed to him. Your father, fearful that he might not be able to contain himself,

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an unsuccessful attempt made on the 15th of May 1776, Mirabeau wrote to his mother on the 16th.

"An accident, fortunate in the sequel, but very distressing at the time, has protracted my escape, which was fixed for yesterday. M. de Montherot, afraid of committing himself, made a great disturbance, which was unreasonable in every respect. The prudence of Madame de Changey and her active benevolence parried the blow, at least in a great measure, and the preparations for departure have been made to appear only those of a pleasure party of young people."

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 393.

did not wish to see you. Your brother and sister have done you no other injury than to oppose your flight by reasoning with you, and watching over you. Having tried mild measures, they were forced to frustrate your attempt openly *."

" O mother!" replied Sophie, "you speak of kindness and indulgence! Do you no longer remember that you caused the Count to be arrested at Dijon? Remember the letters which you wrote to M. de Monnier, in order that I should find the same slavery on my return to him? The Count was under your own eye, quiet, imprisoned, resigned. We were submissive, being satisfied with writing to each other; but you did not think him sufficiently unhappy, because M. de Changey paid him those attentions which one gentleman owes to another. I question whether my brother and sister's behaviour towards me can be called 'reasoning' and 'mildness.' They took advantage of my disconsolate situation, spoke only in threats, overwhelmed me with harsh words and cutting raillery, perpetually teased M. de Monnier to give his consent to my being placed in a convent, urged him to watch me and intercept my letters, and aided him in so doing; they even extorted a promise from him to refuse me the merest trifles, if I at all appeared to have a wish for them. My sister placed the whole town in her confidence, by going to vent her

* Unpublished letter from Madame de Ruffey to her daughter, dated July 12th 1777.

displeasure upon such of my friends as she suspected of doing me an act of kindness. She made use of the foulest epithets in talking of me. I wished to be in a convent, and I told them so; but I wished to be there solely on M. de Monnier's authority, and to be allowed to write there. But all was in vain: they were in quest of a house of correction, and it was by treating me like an insane person that they wished to gain my affection! M. de Monnier, full of their suggestions, and in execution of their commands, rendered life a burthen to me. He took my letters, submitted them to the perusal of the parish priest, kept them two days without telling me a word about them, and during that time affected to pay me numberless attentions, against which I was on my guard, knowing his hypocrisy. He burst forth at length into fits of violence; and gave his word of honour that he would obtain a *lettre de cachet* against me *, though he was well aware I had so strong an aversion to a convent, that I assured him I would there stab myself, and was capable of doing it. †"

Mirabeau, who had taken refuge at Verrières, a village only a league from Pontarlier, but on a foreign territory, could not remain there, for fear of Saint-Mauris's persecutions. He therefore went on to

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to her mother, dated July 18th 1777.

† Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated August 1st 1776.

Geneva, and in crossing the lake nearly perished in a storm. His sister, Madame de Cabris, was at Lyons, and he saw her there. She engaged him to quit the kingdom with Sophie, by representing to him her terrors, her entreaties, and her dangers. She offered to aid the two lovers, even to accompany them, conjointly with an adventurer named Brianson *, who attended her everywhere. These attempts failed for some time; and Mirabeau, who distrusted his attachment, which did not yet completely blind him, went to hide himself a hundred leagues off in Provence, to escape from the misguidance of love and despair.

Meanwhile, Sophie was quite disconsolate at Pontarlier. We have most of the letters which she wrote to Mirabeau. She daily proposed to him new means of escape †. Madame de Ruffey suspected as much.

"She has informed M. de Monnier that I want to escape; that the whole family will make him answerable for it, as they cannot prevail upon him to

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* Denis Jean Augustin Jausserandy Brianson, ex-officer of the regiment Royal Roussillon, born in 1750. He was an obscure individual, without profession, fortune, or morals; always hid, always wandering, always pursued, and forced to have recourse to expedients to live. Yet Peuchet makes him Governor of Grasse, though that place had no governor. Vol. i. p. 126.

† "It is true that he made the first proposal to go, and the Ruffeys are well aware of it, as the two letters from Dijon, in which you even traced me a plan for it, are in their possession."—*Original Letters from Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 39.

place me in a convent. He tells her, in reply, that he is not afraid of it; that her letter will not mend matters; that she has taken a false alarm; that he believes me very repentant; that if she had kept me when he had requested her to do so, all this would not have happened; finally, that he will not in the least alter his course, nor put up bars. It was probably proposed to put me in a cage. . . . What an amiable family *!"

The reader must perceive how absurd and ill-judged was the severity by which they continued to irritate a young woman, already so deeply enamoured, who might perhaps have been reclaimed by kind treatment, by kind and sensible remonstrances, during the FIVE WHOLE MONTHS which elapsed between her return to her husband's home and her flight †. But Sophie was more and more persecuted. Mirabeau, who had left Provence, continued to wander and conceal himself. The letters from the lovers to each other did not always reach their destination.

"Mind," said she, "if you do not write to me, if I do not hear from you, I will no longer be answerable for any thing. At night I read all your protestations.

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, under the name of the Count of Montchevrey, dated June 4th 1776.

† Our extracts will enable the reader to appreciate the good faith or the inaccuracy of Peuchet, who can only find "a vain pretence for escape in the atrocious manner, as Mirabeau states, in which he and his mistress were treated." Vol. i. p. 186. The author's intentions and style are equally discernible from this passage.

O my friend! I repeat them after you; yes! I swear that I will be yours, and yours only. Nothing shall diminish my love for you. I have told you a thousand times, that I will neither survive you nor your love. I know that they have not done me all the harm they wished, but they have done all they had it in their power to do. There are things beyond their power: they cannot deprive me of your affection. It is my only treasure, all I esteem, all I love in the world; I am sure that they can never deprive me of it, for I shall never deserve to lose it! Fear nothing! Whatever snares are laid for me, I shall escape them. I have already declared that were I to see, even in your handwriting, that you loved me no longer—were it sealed with our private motto, accompanied by all the marks that might make me recognise it, I should still consider it a forgery, so certain am I of you, such reliance do I place on your protestations, and on your affection *. Hear me: I can no longer endure all this suffering; it is too distressing to be at such a distance from my husband. Let us meet again, or let me die!

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 24th 1776. Let us here observe that this letter justifies one of Mirabeau's positive assertions:—"Madame de Monnier never once deceived her husband, except when he chose to be deceived. She told him that she loved me, that she should always do so, that she would never cease writing to me, and that poison or flight should save her from the convent."— *Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 396.

I shall not be here next year, for I now suffer more than I can or will bear. To live away from you is dying a thousand deaths every day. When I consider that I should have years to wait, my heart fails me. After what we have already done, there is no receding: let us then make haste to render each other happy. I ask for you alone. All conditions will be agreeable to me, provided I share your fate, and that we never part *. What do you wait for then? Oh! let us make haste, my love! My health, for I am dying here, your own, for you would soon follow me, the want we have of each other—every thing requires it †. Each moment do I feel the more that I cannot exist or be happy except through and near you. Sophie suffers too much on account of this forced separation, to endure it long. Come quickly, come, or you will no longer have a Sophie ‡. Alas! you no longer write to me! Why did you ever do so? Why did you not leave me to die without shaking by your silence my certainty of your love! Death would have been sweet compared with what I suffer. Your affection is every thing to me; I see, I act, and feel only through it, for it is identic with my life, and I cannot lose it but with my life. If you write again, come for a short time at least, that I

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 26th 1776.

† Letter from the same to the same, dated July 16th 1776.

‡ The same, dated August 16th 1776.

may see you once more, and yield my last breath with your hand on my heart, and swearing to you that I lived for you alone *. Am I then never to receive the signal of departure? You stated that we should not feel want in our place of refuge; that you would become a teacher of languages, music, and painting †. You have surely the same idea still; and what will I not do?—no matter, whether I have to work at home, or in a shop, or as a nursery maid. I will do any thing you like, provided we are together. There is nothing I would not undertake to be near you: no occupation would startle me, and I am terribly so at my present situation. I can endure it no longer; it must have an end; I repeat over and over again, GABRIEL OR DEATH ‡!"

These burning agitations of mind and heart unsettled Mirabeau no less than it did Sophie. His internal anguish was the more distressing, because a remnant of

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated August 20th 1776.

† Cadet de Gassicourt, in his notice published in the Year VIII, and full of errors which escaped the good faith of that author, whose only fault is having set up as a biographer, without being able, or having taken the necessary measures to accomplish the task, states, p. 17, that Mirabeau became an usher in Holland. This fact is not more true than a great many others, and yet the author has repeated it in p. 13 of a second edition, published in 1822.

‡ Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated August 1st 1776.

reason forbade him to yield to the desperate proposal of elopement and expatriation.

"Alas! Yes: I confess my fault; I will not even palliate it;—I wish only to expose its cause and my motives. Before I committed it, I struggled violently with myself, and I yielded to my attachment from inability to withstand it. I was unmanned by her tears and my own regret; burning with love and indignation; and forced to a choice between that and a greater evil*."

Let us judge, by the two following letters, of the unhappy man's feelings.

"O Louisa†! O Pylades‡! What shall I add to my letters? My fate is becoming worse every instant. I have no news: it appears that I am not yet to receive any from you. But about Sophie? My whole being is unsettled. I do not know what to resolve upon, and am unable to wait. To render my embarrassment complete, the commandant of the town leaves this place. He asked me very politely, but very earnestly, to give him my name and some references, excusing himself on account of the duties of his office, &c. I gave him the name of Monchevrey; he seemed to have doubts, and asked me in what regiment I served. I told him, and the

* Original Letter from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 362.

† Name of Madame de Cabris.

‡ Name which Mirabeau gave to Brianson, then with Madame de Cabris, at Lyons.

deception will be easily discovered. He related to me many adventures of refugees; I kept my countenance; but he is sure to set inquiries on foot. I told him that I was a victim of power; that I had made up my mind to go to Turin, and beg an asylum of the king, but was waiting for positive orders from France. I requested him to inform me whether he had received instructions to make inquiries; he told me he had not; that the most prudent course would be to go to Turin; that the king was kindness itself; that some adventurers from Switzerland, having misbehaved, had occasioned such distrust of late, that it was expected the commandants would use the greatest precautions; that however with letters of introduction, I should be received at Chambery and at Turin with all possible kindness and distinction. This enables me to perceive that it is prudent to make only a short stay here. But nothing on earth shall induce me to leave this country until I receive positive orders. If our affairs force me to go to Chambery, try if you can obtain some letters of introduction for me. If Pylades had been in Provence, I would have gone instantly to Nice; but I await your arrangements here. Write to Sophie; tell her that she must have received six packets from me, one from Verrières dated 5th instant, one from Morges dated the 6th, one from Geneva dated the 7th, another from Geneva dated the 8th, one from Tonon dated the 9th, another despatched to-day the 12th. Good God! what

will be the end of all this? I must not press her. O Sophie! what do I not sacrifice to love! I embrace you tenderly *."

"I have nothing new for you my amiable sister; my sorrow increases daily, and my unsettled health remains pretty much the same. I have not had a word from France since the 5th instant; and we have now reached the 15th. Sophie's letter was desperate; I have every thing to fear on her account. Alas! she is the only object that now occupies me. Why need I fear their persecutions, their efforts and their lawsuits? If I am to be separated from her, I prefer tortures and death to a dungeon! I am thus banished from my country, separated from you, without the hope of again seeing my son, and lost to all my friends, without having derived from my devotedness any benefit that can compensate for the smallest of my losses! I have sacrificed all to love, and yet have done nothing for love. I shall never dare to return to my country, should I even wish it. Exposed to the insulting pity of those poor beings who think themselves wise, because they are incapable of forming any attachment; tortured by those vipers which dare to slander me at a distance, by saying that I have robbed Sophie and suborned her; severely condemned by fools who call their prejudices morality;—what should I do in France?—and what can I wish to

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his sister, Madame de Cabris, dated from Tonon (Thonon) in Savoy, June 12th 1776.

do far away from Sophie? My situation is a violent disease which tortures my soul, and gnaws all my physical energy. Love is the only remedy. If it escape me I shall sink under my burthen . . . My dear sister, I try all manner of means, I struggle in every sense. Strive to put Sophie in possession of the enclosed: it contains merely a few lines, but those are quite essential to keep up her courage, and give her some consolation. Write to me. Do write. I never was more in want of you. I am quite sure that you have written to me: but the post keeps pace with neither my head nor my heart *."

When Mirabeau escaped from the Castle of Dijon, his father was in doubt whether or not he should have him pursued.

"Some kind-hearted friends, and among others the Duke of Nivernois, were of opinion that I should not send after that young madman, but leave him to carve out his own destiny by some decided catastrophe.

"I interrogated myself for a considerable time. At length the voice of conscience and honour, which I consulted in the silence of night, gained the victory in my heart †."

The Marquis's measures were rapid. On the 4th

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madame de Cabris, dated June 15th 1776, dated also from Thonon.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 22nd 1776.

of June, the minister Amelot, issued a warrant for Mirabeau's arrest. We possess this document, bearing a marginal note addressed to the Syndic of the Inspector of Police.

"I have been well served by my friends. The system is stricter. I have obtained the Mont St. Michel*. I think this prison is a secure one although Montgomery escaped from it†; because there is, in the first place, the castle, then the mountain entirely surrounded by a wall, then comes a passage through the sands, of rather considerable length, where guides are necessary under pain of being buried in the quicksands‡. I lost not a moment, and I may even say that I was served with the orders at a moment's notice. I have at length made up my mind to have an Inspector of Police, a chosen man, unequalled in all Europe for this sort of thing, who, in consideration of a sum of money has taken upon himself to apprehend and conduct him to his prison§. He is bearer of the most precise orders

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* One of the strongest prisons in France, situated upon a rock advancing into the sea, on the coast of Normandy, and four leagues from Avranches. Mirabeau draws a frightful picture of it in the "Lettres de Cachet," vol. i. p. 280; but without mentioning that he was to have been removed thither.

† Same letter, dated August 12th 1776.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 16th 1776.

§ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 4th 1776.

for all foreign courts, and to all our ambassadors. But only imagine the enormous expense thus incurred for this man, and two others he takes with him; besides the expense of travelling post, and the disbursements requisite to bribe spies. My resolution is now taken *."

The Inspector Muron immediately took the field, accompanied by two others, one of whom was M. de Brugnières, who afterwards captured Mirabeau, and subsequently became his confidential agent †. The police agents left Paris on the 6th of July, and vainly endeavoured during nearly two months to discover his place of retreat. We have mentioned the rather curious details of these transactions in the Appendix at the end of the present volume.

It may easily be conceived that the fruitlessness of so much exertions and expense, was a source of severe mortification to the Marquis of Mirabeau.

"I learnt he was in Savoy. He has been followed to that country, but the rascal decamps every day. He possesses the secret of escaping from those cowardly or knavish hounds, and he will ravage the world with his

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 14th 1776. We find there the following passage:—

"Only imagine the expense: here is the tax; sixteen francs ten sous per post, because he takes two men with him, paid double in a foreign country. Fifteen francs per diem, and five francs for each of his agents; and then the private expenses for bribing spies."

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. pp. 16, 71, 198, 229, 245.

detestable talents*. Their reports would have driven me to despair, were I not in a manner, steeled against the tricks of fortune, or rather, profoundly resigned to the will of Providence†. My people, either knaves or idiots, have now returned to Lorgues, where they have found nothing but the form of the beast‡. Instead of watching Brianson, they took it into their heads that our rogue had crossed the sea, and thus they entirely missed him.

"Meanwhile, I received information, through some intercepted letters, that our man was in the territory of Grasse, shut up in a room with the very shutters closed, and where he did not see day-light. Every night Brianson was with him. Instead of sticking close to this man whom they knew to be his guide, they conversed with him, supped with him, and then went gaping at the stars!§"

Mirabeau, directed either by chance, or by address, had followed a route which made him, it is true, elude discovery, but which led him to the place where his faults and misfortunes were to reach their climax. He

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated July 11th 1776.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 16th 1776.

‡ The same, dated Lorgues, August 29th 1776. Lorgues, in Provence, two leagues from Draguignan.

§ Letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 16th 1776.

returned to Switzerland, and to the neighbourhood of Pontarlier. All his steps had been advised, all his measures supported, by Brianson and Madame de Cabris. This lady had written, less than a month before, to Sophie in the following terms:—

"My dear friend, Brianson informs you that I am to decide upon your fate. Ah! Sophie, is not that telling you that you may be assured of happiness? My answer is that I consent to every thing. I think you will do well to make haste: you understand me. Love *your sister* who is tenderly attached to you and longs only for the time when you shall be reunited *."

Nevertheless, shortly after, Brianson betrayed to the agents of the Marquis the true route taken by Mirabeau.

"Brianson, probably converted through fear of the consequences †, and otherwise highly dissatisfied, gave or showed them (the inspectors) a letter, stating that he (Mirabeau) was proceding to Savoy, and thence

* Unpublished letter from Madame de Cabris to Sophie, dated Lyons, July 27th 1776. See also Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 137. In short, Sophie herself, alluding to this letter, wrote to Mirabeau on the 18th of August 1776, as follows:—

"I have received a letter from Louise (Madame de Cabris). What pleasure it gives me! She tells me that she consents to everything. We are then going to be happy! we shall not be separated again!"

† We shall presently show that Brianson's treachery was not the effect of "fear," but proceeded from resentment against Mirabeau.

to Verrières in Switzerland. They are hastening thither *.

Brianson thus betrayed the secret of a route which he had himself traced out, and wanted to prevent the execution of a project suggested and planned by himself. But what was the cause of this inconsistent and sudden perfidy? Mirabeau had already found occasion to complain of an act of cowardice, if not treachery, on his part.

"He left me †, (whilst I had the fever,) fighting with twelve boatmen of the Rhône, whom the dastard had irritated much against my will, and then run away. I had, on this occasion, the happiness of getting out of the scrape without shedding a single drop of blood, whilst the vile coward, who has several times in his life attempted murder, fired two pistols at a man, whom Providence permitted he should miss ‡."

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 29th 1776.

† June 30th 1776. See Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 353.

‡ Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his sister, Madame du Saillant, dated September 10th 1780. This account is confirmed by the following passage, in a report by the Inspector of Police, Muron, dated July 27th 1776.

"M. de Brianson behaved like a brigand on returning from Secelles (Seyssel) to Lyons. He insulted the boatmen, and threw stones at them; he lost a four-barrelled pistol, and twice missed fire at a boatman, the priming alone going off. What a business it would have turned out had the boatman been killed!"

Subsequently to that period, a violent altercation, which took place between Mirabeau and Brianson, was the cause of an irreconcilable enmity between them.

" My dear Sister, the real motive for which M. de Brianson, and, consequently, Madame de Cabris, became incensed against me is this: they had concealed me at Lyons; Madame de Cabris fearing some arbitrary act of the government, M. de Brianson indulged in the most vulgar abuse, which notwithstanding my patience, at length roused my anger. This threw him into a perfect fit of frenzy. He said, that my uncle's or my father's life should answer for it, should either of them dare to attempt any thing against her. I treated him as the lowest of mankind; he rushed to his sword, I flew to mine; had it not been for Madame de Cabris, we should have cut one another's throats. Is this the action of a bad son *?"

Although thus informed by Brianson, the Marquis of Mirabeau still doubted or pretended to doubt the success of the measures he had taken.

" In the present enervated and corrupt times, during the prevailing madness for anarchy, and being on the eve of revolutions brought on because too many poor are hanged, and too few rich, ruffians have a fine game of it, and if they do no more harm, it is because their

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madame du Saillant, dated September 27th 1780.

claws are not sharp enough *. I shall have spent two hundred and fifty louis at least in vain †, in order to destroy the link of this union of malefactors. You will see that they will not catch him ‡."

But indeed the police hounds could "catch" him, and easily too; for Mirabeau, after passing "the mountains of the County of Nice, and Turin, the Great St. Bernard, the Valais, &c. §," had arrived at Verrières, the very spot indicated by Brianson, on the 23rd of August, six days previously to the letter we have just given. In the night of that same day, Sophie, informed by a message, disguised herself in man's attire, got over the garden wall by means of a ladder, and joined Mirabeau at the place where he was waiting for her, and where they remained until the 15th of September. Why were they not arrested during that

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 16th 1776. The Marquis expresses himself, at a later period, in a similar manner:

"Those people are witty and have good manners, and this age was made for good-for-nothing fellows."—*Letter inserted in the Case for the Countess of Mirabeau, &c.*, p. 28.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 16th 1776. In another letter the Marquis says:—

"The last year's excursion cost me six thousand six hundred francs, everything agreed for and settled."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 31st 1777.*

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 29th 1776.

§ Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 353.

interval by the agents, who were aware of the place of their retreat? The two fugitives imprudently remained there without even changing their names, as is proved by the proceedings preliminary to the judgment by default. A disguise, however, would have been useless and impossible, in a place so near Pontarlier, where Sophie and Mirabeau were perfectly well known; because they had been seen there, a hundred times, together and separate.

Such a signal want of vigilance on the part of the agents commissioned to arrest Mirabeau, is certainly very extraordinary after their ardent pursuit. It has indeed been asserted that, being deceived either by false dates, purposely inserted in letters intended to be intercepted *, or by the day agreed upon for the departure of Mirabeau and Sophie having been changed, the Inspectors arrived only two days after†. But the fugitives were only two leagues distant, and did not conceal themselves.

We shall not endeavour to account for this singular proceeding, lest we find Mirabeau's anticipations justified

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* This supposition is corroborated by a passage in the "Second Brief for Counsel's Opinion in the Case of the Count of Mirabeau," against the Marquis of Monnier, p. 90 of the 12mo edition.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Marignane, dated September 9th 1776, and inserted in the Case for the Countess of Mirabeau, p. 22.

to which he alluded two years after, when he wrote as follows:—

"The neighbourhood of Switzerland appeared to me your only motive. You were desirous of dissolving, as much as lay in your power, the natural and social ties which bound me to France *."

This supposition is confirmed by two letters we have before us.

"I conceive it an obligation imposed upon me to reflect immediately, and continually, upon the means of sealing the expatriation of this wretched madman, and ridding the family of him for ever †. My friends told me that the most advantageous thing for me would be that this scoundrel should seal his own doom by some decided catastrophe, some crime that would cause his banishment for ever from the kingdom ‡."

We have thus given the particulars, and perhaps at too great length, of Mirabeau's flight, and his painful

* Extract, already quoted, from the Memoir of Mirabeau, bearing date March 1st 1778. Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 352.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 3rd 1776.

‡ Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Marignane, dated September 9th 1776, inserted in the Case for the Countess of Mirabeau, p. 20. See also the letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 22nd 1776.

efforts to baffle the attempts made to discover him. We have thought that the perusal of the original procès-verbal, which we have placed in the Appendix, would awaken a certain degree of curiosity, on account of the great interest excited by such a man in such a situation, and that it would, besides, assist us in our avowed object of proving that the culpable actions of Mirabeau, as well as his minor faults, were the effect of the unceasing persecutions he underwent, as much and perhaps more than the result of his own ungovernable passions. We could, likewise, furnish a very circumstantial account of the manner in which that time was spent, which the fugitives imprudently lost at Verrières; of the route they followed when they determined upon leaving that place, and of all circumstances connected with this act of madness and despair. But such an account would necessarily be mixed up with many scandalous incidents, which we always reject, because they are beneath the dignity of history which they degrade, and indeed destroy its truth, for history ought to depict the great actions, and not passing incidents in the life of the persons whose career it traces;—it should present their striking features, and not their secret deformities.

We therefore leave such details to the oblivion in which they are now fortunately entombed. But our profound conviction forces us to dwell some time longer upon the principal event, the fatal

notoriety of which has for the last fifty years, been a stain on Mirabeau's memory, and will probably continue so for ever. This is a duty the more incumbent upon us, because we write, as it were, by his own command, and because he asked to be "heard previously to being judged." This wish is expressed many times in the letters from Vincennes. We shall not quote from those letters the passages to which we allude, but merely give an extract from a letter hitherto unknown to the public.

"Having been capable of sacrificing myself to the purest, the most tender, and the most generous love—I repeat, sacrificing myself, voluntary and collectedly (as much so as it is possible to do when in love), with reflection, and after mature consideration—I have at least a right to be heard in my defence, before I am judged *."

It was not, he declares, and we cannot repeat it too often, it was not without hesitation, nor without a struggle that he adopted the fatal resolution of quitting his native country. His father wrote as follows, on the occasion:

"Here are those two mad people, giving a proof that madness is a passion; for in the present age, when husbands are so benignant, on the one hand a madman,

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madlle. Danvers, written in the Donjon of Vincennes, dated October 23rd 1780.

incapable of sensibility, and on the other a strumpet, invent a new species of outrageous exposure, for the mere pleasure of doing so *."

Mirabeau's biographers, under the influence of the same error, have looke dupon his carrying off Sophie, as an act of delirium or of immorality, without stopping to appreciate the causes to which he was forced to yield, and the devotedness which hurried him on. He has however answered them by anticipation :—

" There are hearts which are not to be judged by ordinary principles : that would be taking the horizon for the boundaries of the world †."

In another letter, he explains, after several previous statements, the situation in which circumstances, had placed him.

" I will ask how it can be supposed that a man, allowed to possess certain faculties and some knowledge, should have several times perilled his life, risked his fortune, and lost his liberty, from no other motive than to cause an exposure? What object could he have in such exposure? Was it necessary for me to implicate Madame de Monnier, in order to acquire the reputation of having had an intrigue? Are my character and mind of a nature to lead any one to

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 9th 1776.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 9th 1776.

suppose that I am ambitious of obtaining the success of coxcombs? If my vanity alone had been interested in making a conquest,—a very flattering one, certainly—was it not satisfied*? I was, no doubt, wrong in engaging myself, as I did, with Madame de Monnier; but, supposing the engagement once taken, upon which there was no longer any time to deliberate, was I not justified in seeking and finding every means of serving her? She could, and ought to command every thing from me, short of poisoning or assassination†."

We find elsewhere, that he speaks in the same sense, almost in the same terms; and he is not now writing a justification to his father; for it may be supposed that such justification might have been adroitly coloured. He wrote to another person, an entire stranger to the family, and who, by her sex, age, and obscure station in society, had no power of rendering any service to the prisoner.

"With regard to the history of Sophie," said he, "hear me. I swear to you before Almighty God, that Sophie would have ended her days by poison, if I had not responded to her call. She had resolved not to submit to the loss of liberty, even momentarily. She is the mildest, the most feeling, the most amiable, the most affectionate of women, but her placid disposition

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 284.

† Idem, vol. i. p. 393.

veils the most impetuous mind. My greatest fault, (and could it be otherwise with a love so young, so strong, and so persecuted?) my principal error lies in having exposed her by our mutual imprudence. All the rest, as I have said, was invincibly linked together. I knew then, as I do now, that it was the greatest of follies to elope with her. But could I allow myself to be thought, could I bring myself to be in reality, ungrateful and pusillanimous? What do I say?—could I allow her to swallow the fatal draught, as I could not doubt she would have done? This is the point of view in which I must be judged; and you will then see that I have sacrificed myself and not her. It was no longer a question of delicacy, it was one of life and death. Could I hesitate *?"

We may still be allowed a few more extracts; for if our duty is understood, we shall be excused for carrying on even beyond the bounds of evidence, in extenuation of Mirabeau's faults, a discussion of the most serious error of his youth.

"Were I," he wrote to his uncle, "to send you the pathetic and heart-rending letter which made me cross the Alps three times, expose my life twenty times, and plunge headlong into the abyss, I might ask you whether, instead of an infamous ravisher, I am not a

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madlle Danvers, written from the Donjon of Vincennes, dated November 9th 1780. We subjoin a fac-simile of this passage.

generous man, who, finding himself more deeply engaged than he ought to have been, but seeing at the same time that as the engagement subsisted, he owed every thing to her whom he had involved by it, and whose life was in jeopardy, wished to pay the penalty of his first fault, and serve, according to her desire, the woman he had ruined, when, with a poniard pointed at her heart, she claimed assistance from him *. The remainder was enforced, it was matter of duty†. Madame de Monnier had no resource but in me; her reputation was lost, and she was exposed to ruin through my fault‡. Was I basely to desert her while I was able to defend her§. After having led her to the brink of the precipice, was I to plunge her into it‖? Had I done so, I should have been a prodigy of cowardice, a monster of ingratitude¶. Then I should have deserved my fate; then I should have been the most contemptible of men**. The bare thought excites my horror! She claimed my assistance, and the fulfilment of my promises. I went, I fled, I crossed the Alps, and she came and gave herself up to my honour and good faith††."

"I appeal," added Mirabeau, "to this unfortunate

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* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his uncle, the Bailli, dated December 25th 1779.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 369.

‡ Idem, p. 393.

§ Idem, p. 393.

‖ Idem, p. 397.

¶ Idem, p. 369.

** Idem, p. 393.

†† Idem, p. 397.

woman, who is much more capable of immolating herself for me, than of justifying herself at my expense*.

Let us now listen to Sophie; she will prove a contested fact, and show herself worthy of this confidence.

" Cruel friend, you said to me when we parted, that I had rendered you very unhappy; but can you make any comparison between what I suffer, and the felicity you have made me enjoy? Could I not say as much, and a thousand times more to you, since it is I who have done all †? But you do not reproach me! believe then, also, that I am incapable of entertaining the slightest idea of repentance ‡."

In another letter, she says to her mother:—

" You mistake, my dear mother: you say that I have been seduced. It was my own will that did every thing. You assert that we were advised to make an exposure: but it could only harm us. We were forced to do it §."

In another letter, again:—

" If the Marquis (of Monnier) accuses you of having carried me off by force, you will be able to prove by several of my letters, that I was the first to propose it

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* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 397.

† Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated May 28th 1777.

‡ Idem, dated July 6th 1779.

§ Unpublished letter from Sophie to Madame de Ruffey, dated July 11th 1777.

to you, to press you, to command you to do it. There are many of them, in which I expressly urged it. And what could I wish for better than that which assured me of living with you, of hoping every thing from you, of never more quitting you, of being certain of happiness *! In the letters which I propose to you write, with a view to their being produced during the pleadings †, it strikes me, that to make them appear both natural and probable, I must say every thing that I recollect having mentioned at the time. I must talk of the inhabitants of Pontarlier, but without committing any body. I must not recal the history of the letter which the Marquis (of Monnier) stole from me, because that would be giving a value to his copy; but I must repeat the sayings of the priest, which were then mentioned to me, and frequently assert my wish to fly with you; I must also give you assurances of my love, as I have ever done. I think you cannot entertain any scruple respecting this little deception, since we should not make use of it, if Brianson were to return the letters to us ‡. What I write shall contain only

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 28th 1777.

† The then projected Appeal from the Judgment by default, passed May 10th 1777, at Pontarlier, against Mirabeau and Sophie.

‡ The letters written by Sophie to Mirabeau, whilst the latter was wandering about the country and concealing himself, remained in the hands of Brianson; and we shall show the use he threatened and attempted to make of them.

the matter that is in the others. The address shall be no other than the usual one—'For Gabriel.' They know full well that our letters could not have been forwarded in a direct manner *."

We have proof that Sophie endeavoured to show herself, under the same aspect, to other persons, whom she believed disposed to serve Mirabeau, and capable of influencing his fate. When writing to them, she generously attributed to herself the first projects of flight. The proof of this is found in two letters from the Bailli of Mirabeau.

"This woman has written to the Countess of Vence, who is a greater fool than any of her race, imperious, vain, and fond of contradiction, though in other respects respectable. She shows here a letter from that Madame de Monnier, in which she accuses herself, and exculpates your madman †. One means of clearing him is contained in the letter written by this woman to the Countess of Vence, in which she entirely accuses herself, and fully exonerates the fellow from the whole business ‡."

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* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated July 13th 1777.

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated February 21st 1778.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 3rd 1778. The Countess of Vence, here mentioned, is the lady of whom Mirabeau gives so noble a portrait in the Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 338; vol. ii. pp. 71, 277,

From all these circumstances we may justly conclude that in this affair, Mirabeau was again wrongly judged: an act of devotedness was attributed to the most reckless temerity, and the most depraved immorality. We must at all events allow that he foresaw the fatal consequences of this act; that he struggled so long as he was able, and consistently with the feelings of honour with which a love like his could not fail to inspire him; that he at last yielded to absolute necessity alone; finally, that he was led away more by Sophie, than by himself—more by his generous feelings than by his passion. We must further admit that he had a right to pass the judgment upon himself which exists in a letter he wrote the following year to M. Lenoir. This letter has always appeared to us to contain the truest and most energetic portrait of Mirabeau's private character.

"During the whole course of my youthful but strangely eventful life, pregnant with cruel disappointments, I have ever pursued the same line of conduct,

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278; vol. iii. pp. 158, 187, 202, 205, 217, 296, 308, 322, 378, 583. She had been a widow ever since February 1777. It is certain that she endeavoured to serve Mirabeau during his captivity. The following passage in a letter which he wrote to Boucher is a proof of this:—

"The Countess of Vence has restored me to hope. Tell me if it would be impossible to write to her. She is discretion and probity personified."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated August 22nd* 1779.

yet have ever experienced the same fate. I have always been an enthusiastic friend, devoted even to rashness, unceasingly involved in scrapes for other people, and always abandoned by those for whom I committed myself*. I have ever borne the blame of other people's faults, disdaining to offer any excuse for them, because the consciousness of my intentions, and my uprightness were sufficient for my own feelings. I am incapable of defending myself at the expense of any one, even the pusillanimous, the ungrateful, and the treacherous. Nevertheless, I have always been judged upon facts either false in themselves, or entirely distorted; and in spite of all those circumstances, I have never changed either my feelings or my conduct. Such I was, such I am, and such, perhaps, I shall ever be †."

Sophie perfectly appreciated these sacrifices, and her own equalled them. She would even have gone further, had it been in her power—for her passion increased with these struggles. We have described her as disdaining to conceal it, even when the avowal drew down upon her those persecutions which ended in her ruin. At a subsequent period, in the solitude of a dreary prison, deprived of rank, fortune, and liberty, she expressed herself in the same manner, in her com-

* Mirabeau here alludes to Brianson and some others.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. ii. p. 277.

munications to her family, whose pity or pardon she constantly refused, but from whom she expected, at least, the means of satisfying the most pressing wants of nature.

" I cannot prevent you from despising Sophie. If you think her deserving of this feeling from you, it is unfortunate for me that you entertain that opinion; but do not expect that I shall do the same. Of what is not a woman capable of, who has lost her self-esteem? It is in my principle to have but one lover, and to blush neither for him nor for my attachment. I am therefore both hurt and surprised at finding your letters full of invectives against the Count of M. I thought you had reflected upon the evils already produced by feelings of bitterness. If you render my situation still more irksome, merely because no more fears can be entertained respecting what I may do, I dare assert that there is little generosity in the proceeding. The step I have taken could only have proceeded from the profoundest esteem for the man who is the object of it, and from a fixed resolution to love him for ever. I have made him my idol. I never shall change. He has sacrificed every thing for me, and done every thing for me. I have learnt to know him too well to allow any assertion respecting him to make an impression upon me. I do not wish to sound his praises here, but I merely beg that his name may no longer be mentioned in our letters. Why is it wished to detach me from

him? Is it really imagined that I would return to M. Monnier—a man whom I have offended—to solicit a pardon I do not wish for, and exhibit a repentance I do not feel! No, it is a step which would degrade me in your eyes: it would be attributed to the weariness I experience in my prison,—to inconstancy, to interested motives—these shall never be my guides. I may be despoiled of every thing except my way of thinking and my feelings. I never will return under his roof, I solemnly declare; I should prefer dying a felon's death upon the scaffold *!"

In a letter from Sophie, wherein she speaks of one of her fellow prisoners, we find the following energetic expression of the same feeling—

"Her husband has informed her that her prayers alone can soften him. She is consequently going to humble herself; to pray, to prostrate herself before him. Woman! Go, degrade thyself! Solicit thy return to a husband whom thou despisest! Give up thy friend, or rather thy lover! Thou canst still have valets! How vile are women, and how humiliated should I feel at belonging to that sex, if your love did not raise me in my own estimation †!"

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* Unpublished letter from Sophie to her mother, Madame de Ruffey, dated June 19th 1777.

† Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated July 24th 1776.

In the following sentences, we find the same energy expressed in milder terms—

" I should feel sorry if this letter again caused your displeasure—I am far from wishing it. But I know not how to dissemble: if I speak, it must be to say what I think. Do not take it amiss, and force me to deceive you, or to disguise my feelings *. I trust that time, whose aid you invoke, will prove to you that a woman who can sacrifice every thing, remains unchangeable ;—you will then restore to me your esteem †."

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* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Madame de Ruffey, dated July 24th 1776.

† Unpublished letter from Sophie to her mother, Madame de Ruffey, dated July 11th 1777.

Quant à l'histoire de Sophie ! écoutez-moi ; je vous jure devant Dieu que Sophie serait prête pour la raison que je vous ai dite ; elle était décidée à ne pas subir la privation de sa liberté, par même moment ; c'est la femme la plus douce, la plus sensible, la plus aimable, la plus aimante que j'ai jamais ; mais la plus impérieuse aussi l'intérieur le plus tranquille. Mon tort (et l'aimez-vous peut-il m'avoir pas été tel tout lors qu'elle est si jeune, si charmante, si persécutée) mon tort est de l'avoir affichée parmi nos multiples imprudences ; tout le reste, comme je l'ai dit, a été irrésistiblement enchaîné. je le savais alors comme je le sais aujourd'hui, que c'était la plus grande des folies que de l'enlever mais devais-je me l'interdire croire ingratement pusillanime ? que dis-je ? devais-je lui laisser avaler la coupe fatale, comme je ne pouvais boire celle-là ? Voilà dans quel point de vue il faut les juger, ô mon amie ; et vous verrez qu'alors c'est moi et non pas elle que j'ai sacrifié. Il n'était plus question de délicatesse ; il était question vie de la vie ou de la mort-pour-vous, je balançai.

BOOK VI.

MIRABEAU and Sophie left Verrières in Switzerland, for Holland, on the 17th of September 1776, arrived on the 26th at Rotterdam, and on the 7th of October at Amsterdam, where they lodged in the Calvestrand, at the house of a tailor named Lequesne.

Mirabeau's first care was to seek the means of subsistence. And yet it was stated in the pleadings at Pontarlier, repeated in the proceedings which took place in Provence, and again repeated more than twenty times, that the fugitives had carried off a considerable sum of money belonging to the Marquis of Monnier, together with jewels of great value. This monstrous imputation, which Mirabeau has never ceased to deny with the most indignant feelings of injured honour *, proceeded from the animosity, natural

* See the Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, especially vol. i. pp. 173, 404, 406. Second Case for the Count of Mirabeau against the Marquis of Monnier, p. 51—54. Observations on a Defamatory

enough, of Madame de Valdahon, the Marquis of Monnier's daughter formerly disinherited, and also from the

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Libel entitled "Case and Counsel's Opinion for the Countess of Mirabeau," pp. 173—176; "Statement by the Count of Mirabeau," suppressed at the moment of its publication, &c, pp. 38, 41—43, 58. We also give some passages from three letters written a long time previously, by a person more hostile than favourable to Mirabeau.

"Do you not remark, among other numerous calumnies, the carrying off of a casket, which you yourself also believed *, and which is proved to be false by the proceedings, because the Marquis of Monniern ever complained of any such theft, even in the preliminary accusation."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March* 21*st* 1783.

"I see by the law proceedings at Pontarlier that it is not true that your son's accomplice carried away any jewels or money. Do you imagine that a circumstance of this nature would have been forgotten in the accusation which contained so many ridiculous and frivolous charges?"—*Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated March* 28*th* 1783.

"I have questioned that woman's pilot, who assisted her in her escape; he asserts that she went away dressed in man's clothes and carrying nothing, not even a parcel in a handkerchief."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated April* 11*th* 1783. A few days after the Bailli wrote to his brother:—

"I told you that I have had here the servant who served as a guide to that foolish woman. I made him confess, just as a criminal judge would have done, warning him that I was going to question him as he would be questioned before the Court. I cross-examined the poor devil in such a way that he imagined he was

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* The Marquis, with his usual precipitancy of impression, had spoken of spoliation. (Letter dated September 5th 1777, addressed to the Marquis of Marignane.)

correspondence of the Marquis of Mirabeau *. The real fact is, that the fugitives, when they fled, possessed but slender pecuniary means, which they had borrowed from a friend. The husband, represented as having been robbed, was perfectly well aware of the state of destitution they were in. Proof of this is contained in a letter from Sophie :—

" M. de Monnier, knowing that I was at Amsterdam, destitute of pecuniary means, asked for my address only for the purpose of forwarding me some money. He sent his servant Sage to bring me some."

Mirabeau was thus naturally obliged to draw his principal means from his literary labours, and this had perhaps been his motive for choosing Holland as his residence ; for at that period the Dutch booksellers entered largely into literary speculations. Immediately on his arrival, he went to the principal houses in the

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really before a judge, and he gave me, though not without stammering, all the particulars. He asserts that the woman went away dressed as a man, and took nothing at all with her."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated April 11th* 1783.

Let us now hear Mirabeau himself, when addressing the principal instigator of his flight.

" I now work for my livelihood, and can with difficulty earn it. This gives me at least a right to feel angry that people should think me enriched with the spoils of others."—*Unpublished letter, dated Amsterdam, April 28th 1777, from Mirabeau to Brianson.*

* Case of the Countess of Mirabeau, p. 32.

trade. The following is the letter he wrote to one of them, named Mark Michel Rey.

" A series of misfortunes, which it would be useless to relate to you, have forced me, Sir, to leave my country. It must be a matter of indifference to you to know who I am, how unrelenting my persecutors have been, or any other circumstance which, in a country less exposed than this to the impositions of needy adventurers, might claim the sympathy of a feeling man; but I have no doubt you will readily avail yourself of the opportunity of conferring an obligation upon a man of letters, if you find it your interest to do so, added to the satisfaction of performing an act of kindness. I am the author of the ' Essay on Despotism,' a work which, though published some time since at Neufchatel, where it went through two editions in six weeks, has only begun very lately to be known in France, where it has caused too great a sensation for my tranquillity. This essay was composed in a hurried manner, without a plan, without order, and rather as the profession of faith of a citizen than as a literary composition. It may however give you an idea of the manner and style of a young man under seven-and-twenty. I am master of several languages. I work with facility, and am greatly desirous of obtaining employment.

" Try then, Sir, if you can employ me in any way.

We will talk of pecuniary arrangements when you have seen what I am capable of undertaking. The only thing I would ask of you, in case it suits you to propose to me some literary work, is to procure me any books to which I may wish to refer. I beg of you to answer me with the same frankness that I make this application. I will send this evening for your reply."

"P. S. The 'Essay on Despotism' is selling at present in France, at rather a high price. The typographical part of the work is very defective. If you think you could make a profitable speculation by another edition, I would improve and considerably increase it; but that would take some time.

"If, at this moment you are inclined to publish a valuable edition of any work, I can venture to say that you would find few editors more accurate and laborious than I am *."

This first application, it would appear, was not successful, for we find that Mirabeau wrote again, a few days after, in the following terms:—

"When a man merely begs you to make a gratuitous trial of his labours, it would be difficult for you to become his *victim*. I was the first, however, to say that I was prepared for that mistrust with which the innumerable adventurers in this country cannot

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. M. Rey, Bookseller, dated October 22nd 1776.

fail to inspire your countrymen. Being little accustomed to make bargains, you shall be at liberty to fix the value of my labours when you have seen them, and not before. I send the 'Essay on Despotism.' It is a second and very defective edition. I almost gave my manuscript to M. Fauche, of Neufchatel; he gained by it two hundred louis. I did not then intend ever to fix a price upon works, which ought to be free as thought. Read the editor's notice, the dedicatory epistle, (a composition full of new and striking thoughts,) read from page 84 to page 112, (statement of principles), from page 151 to page 159, (portrait of Louis XIV), lastly, from page 174 to page 197, and from page 287 to the end. These two last parts (on fiscality and peroration) will give you an idea of my style, even when I take little pains in correcting it. Do you wish to ascertain whether I possess information? Read my discussion with M. Moreau, from page 257 to page 282, together with the notes at the end of the book. This, Sir, comprises the investigation which it is essential you should make. Were I to tell you that I am a man of quality, and shall one day possess an income of a hundred thousand francs a year, you would not believe me; and even if you gave credit to my assertion, it would not benefit you much. I could, however, furnish you with proof of it, through the French resident at Rotterdam, who knows me personally. But, after all, it must be of little consequence to you, and you must

have a better opinion of a man, who, under difficult circumstances, conceals himself, and devotes his time to labour, than of one who would use his name to make dupes, were it only for a short time. If you have any proposal to make to me, have the goodness to let me know at what hour I can speak to you this evening or to-morrow. I claim this from your politeness, and at the same time I request secresy *."

We possess some particulars of Mirabeau's and Sophie's history during their stay in Amsterdam; but they are scarcely worth publication:—

Et quæ desperat tractata nitescere posse, relinquit.

Besides, the lovers were now together, and of course no letters passed between them. The situation they were in precluded their having much correspondence with any one, except indeed with Mirabeau's mother, who wrote several letters to them, and received a great number in reply, the originals of which are in our possession. As we are often deterred through delicacy and a detestation of scandal, from making use of all the documents in our hands, we do not much regret possessing so few, relative to this period, of which we should not take any further notice, even although we had a better knowledge of the events it embraces. We therefore confine our extracts to

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. M. Rey, dated October 24th 1776.

a few unpublished passages, to which the most scrupulous delicacy could not object, and some short fragments, already published, the whole referring to Mirabeau's stay in Holland.

Mirabeau, in order to conceal his name, had taken that of "Saint-Mathieu *."

"I waited more than three months before I could obtain any employment: for the calculating inhabitants of this country are more than backward in bestowing their confidence; and every bookseller has his own correspondents, whom he regularly employs. My conduct was such as to gain me some credit in a country entirely new to me, where I was quite unknown, where a man is esteemed only in proportion as he makes himself useful, and where a foreigner, unprovided with letters of introduction, is exposed to the greatest mistrust. At length I succeeded in earning a louis a day, by translations from the English, and other literary occupations; but I worked from six o'clock in the morning until nine at night."

Mirabeau obtained employment from Rey, the bookseller, with whom J. J. Rousseau had sometimes reason to be satisfied and sometimes the reverse, and of whom Mirabeau had great reason to complain, if we may judge from the following expressions by Sophie:—

"He (Rousseau) was not formed, any more than

* The name of a fief belonging to his mother, situated in Limousin.

yourself, to be connected with that rascally bookseller, Michel Rey."

Mirabeau was also employed by Changuyon, who "overwhelmed him with work *."

Notwithstanding Mirabeau's persevering efforts, he could scarcely supply the wants of his mysterious household, "in the dearest country in Europe not excepting London †." He now led, however, a tranquil and happy life.

"How unhappy would our existence have been in Amsterdam, had we been merely common lovers! How deeply would any other female have felt such privations! How cruel would such a penurious manner of living, which you supported so cheerfully, have appeared to any other! All my time was absorbed in study; and a man twice my age would have led a less sedentary life. But your affection bears this in remembrance. I was sometimes carried away by my vivacity and impatience, which might have appeared to you the effect of ill-temper; a kiss from you always dispelled the temporary gloom of my countenance, and restored quietude to my heart."

* In a letter written November 10th 1784 to Chamfort (Paris, Year V. p. 67.) it may be seen that Changuyon offered to employ Mirabeau, who endeavoured, by his own labour to remedy the utter destitution in which his father had left him.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 406.

"Yes, yes," replied Sophie; "we were both of us so happy, so satisfied, so sure of each other's affection! Alas! my Gabriel was not so happy as I was: his tender solicitude sought to avoid every thing that might give pain to his Sophie; he thought but of consoling her, and drying her tears! I have often caused yours to flow—you, for whom I would have given a thousand lives. But, you have forgiven me, you have said so; repeat it over again and again. You fled from my eager embraces, fearful that they might make you forget your books; and afterwards, with what joy did you receive them, with what happiness did I press you in my arms! How often have you torn yourself from my love to pursue tedious occupations! But nothing was tedious for you when Sophie's welfare was at stake. Dearest Gabriel, you are indeed the model of true lovers."

On the other hand, Mirabeau expressed himself thus:—

"One hour devoted to music relieved me from my studious application; and my adorable partner, who, although brought up in the lap of luxury, had never been in such good spirits, so courageous, so attentive, and so sweet-tempered as during our poverty, embellished my existence. Her unchanging sweetness of disposition, and her overflowing sensibility displayed themselves to the fullest extent. O my father! we did not resemble

two insensate lovers, whom the blind passion of the moment had driven from their country; and indeed we were not such."

During Mirabeau's stay in Holland, he was frequently urged, even by his mother, to separate himself from Sophie, whom the Marquis of Monnier wished to return to him, promising to forgive and forget what had passed. Sophie, with her accustomed generosity, was about to make every possible sacrifice; and of this she, herself, gives her a proof:—

"Yes, my dearest mother, regulate every thing with your friends and advisers. I submit to every thing you may decide upon; for I am convinced you will not replace me under the dependence of M. de Monnier, a humiliation I must not, cannot, undergo. If the plan relative to the convent in Limousin could be adopted, I should prefer it, because it would bring me nearer to you *."

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to the Marchioness of Mirabeau, dated Amsterdam, February 25th 1777, two months and a half prior to the arrest. In other letters, dated April 13th and 14th and May 1st, this declaration is repeated. The expression "my dear mother" will be remarked. The Marchioness of Mirabeau had not only allowed it, but even requested it. This is another fact from which many others may be deduced; it also helps to explain, and, in some measure to excuse, Mirabeau's errors.

Independently of this appellation, this same letter contains another proof of the intimacy which had taken place between Mirabeau's mother and his mistress.

"The promise you are kind enough to make, of sending me your

It may easily be conceived that Mirabeau was indignant at the proposal. In vain did his mother press him to accede to it, reminding him of the steps he had taken in the month of January 1776, to obtain, from the Count of Saint-Germain, some employment in the army. We here give a single passage from one of Mirabeau's letters to his mother, in reply.

" Madame de Cabris must have informed you that it is impossible for me to enter the army. I am bound by sacred ties which nothing can dissolve in my heart and conscience. My conduct, and the interest you condescend to take in our affairs, must be based upon these considerations; for sooner would I become a common porter than fail in what I owe to her who has done every thing for me. It is not my generous mother who will condemn this resolution *, from which the most respectful, the most attached of sons, but at the same

portrait, fills me with joy. My portrait, which you are so good as to keep, will remind you of your promise."

We shall, finally, remark, that the Marquis of Mirabeau treated her youngest daughter's lover as she did her eldest son's mistress. We learn this from the Marquis of Mirabeau.

" The mother, whilst in the convent, called Brianson her son-in-law."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 19th 1777.*

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated Amsterdam, October 19th 1776. See also, on this subject, a passage in the " Letters from Vincennes," vol. i. p. 407, in which Mirabeau, who is writing to the Marquis, in the presence of a public officer, the statement of March 1st 1778, gives credit to his mother for her good advice, though it was of no avail.

time most obstinate of men, will never swerve, because he looks upon it as a sacred duty *."

We shall say nothing more of the laborious but happy life of the lovers, but close this account with the following touching comparison which Sophie wrote five years after.

" You will read in the last number of the Mercury † a little chivalrous history that will please you. You will be particularly delighted with Sabinus, that Roman who, during the reign of Vespasian, shut himself up in a subterranean cavern with his wife ‡. Their lives, spent far from human society which only destroys happiness, resembled ours at Amsterdam; and yet how wide a

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated November 11th 1776. The Marchioness of Mirabeau has strongly insisted; her son wrote her a few days after as follows:—

" Do you conceive it consistent with my honour, and my duty, to desert a woman who has done so much for me, and who, probably, did not act thus against my will? I will not debate with you respecting the preliminaries. Suppose I seduced her, and that I did wrong; that I induced her to follow me, and again did wrong: it will still remain certain that the past no longer depends upon me. The question now is merely to know whether at the present time, which does depend upon me, I must, *in honour*, be guilty of the most odious perfidy? I am not lost; but if I am fated so to be, I expect from you the advice that I must be honest above everything."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated November 21st* 1776.

† It was the number in which an account was given of the admission of Lemierre and the Count de Tressan to the French Academy.

‡ Eponina.

difference in other respects! They lived nine years in their place of concealment, we only spent nine months in ours. They had two children who lived, and our poor little girl is no more. They were arrested together as we were, but they died together, and fell by the same blow. Truly they were much happier than we *."

Shortly after the departure of the two fugitives, the Marquis of Monnier discovered Mirabeau's place of retreat, through an act of heedlessness †. The husband,

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated February 8th 1781.

† Here are the particulars which we extract from one of Mirabeau's letters.

"A heedless act of mine contributed to furnish some information to the law harpies of Pontarlier. At a moment when I thought myself without resource, and was endeavouring to get some employment, I told a bookseller here that I was the author of the 'Essay on Despotism.' A few days after he informed me that he had been assured this work was the production of another person, whom he named to me. In order to make you comprehend this, I must tell you that I had been unable to avoid letting this bookseller know my name, because a person from Geneva, who knew me at Marseilles, met me at his house. The indignation naturally excited in the breast of an honest man, by the suspicion that he had advanced so dastardly a falsehood as to attribute to himself a work written by another, drew me into a very imprudent step. I instantly wrote to Fauche, bookseller at Neufchatel, who had published my work, begging him to inform the Dutch bookseller whether or not the Count of M. was the author of the work. I added that I was about to sail for England, &c.; Fauche sent me the certificate, but made many inquiries about me and immediately despatched my letter to the husband. Hereupon one of M. de Monnier's servants came and made inquiries. You know the rest."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 27th* 1777.

still enamoured of his wife, endeavoured to persuade her to return to him, and even sent a confidential servant to Holland for this purpose. Justly irritated at Sophie's obstinate refusal, he commenced proceedings*, and Mirabeau was informed of the circumstance through a lawyer of Pontarlier, M. Mauvaiset, who wrote to him as follows:—

"Proceedings are going on. The decree for re-examination was passed with great publicity. Written proofs are wanting: there is only a note in your handwriting; it is of course attributed to you, as it bears a resemblance to the only document they possess as a means of comparison: your statement for Jeanret†. With regard to other evidence, the Swiss alone can appear against you, and some from Morges, Verrières, and perhaps other places have already been examined.

"But what I cannot help informing you of, is, that the business, which may turn out very serious, could be settled by a compromise, or by a reconciliation between the husband and wife. This would prevent fatal consequences; it is perhaps still time to adopt it. M. de Monnier loved his wife, he still loves her, and

* This complaint, and an additional one, are inserted *verbatim* in the collection of documentary evidence published at the end of the "Second Case for Mirabeau, on the prosecution of the Marquis of Monnier," &c., pp. 11. 14.

† See the "Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 29. vol. iv. pp. 223. 229. We shall have occasion to revert to this statement, and to the ungrateful individual for whom Mirabeau wrote it.

has but a short time to live*. I must say that what I see going on here makes me tremble; my fear increases on finding preliminary steps taken for a judgment by default, when I consider what judges are to decide upon your fate, when, in a word, I think of M. Monnier's influence in this town.

"The Count of Saint-Mauris is eager for your ruin. His memorials to the ministers have not been attended with the success he expected. He has just applied to the Procureur Général of our parliament, to whom it is said, he has sent a copy of his evidence accompanied with a fulminating letter.

"The Marquis of Monnier has a dower and conjugal right to gain†, and as this end is not to be attained without giving his wife an accomplice, he asserts that this accomplice is yourself. You are the guilty man they seek. If evidence is obtained, you will be

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* Unpublished letter from Mauvaiset to Mirabeau, dated March 1st 1777.

† It was rather Madame de Valdahon who would have reaped the pecuniary advantages of the condemnation, and who, above all, gained the advantage of securing her paternal fortune, the hope of which had been formerly destroyed, as well by a formal act disinheriting her, as by her father's second marriage. The Marquis of Monnier, indeed, did nothing of himself to bring about the condemnation: far from it, if Mirabeau is to be believed.

"The old husband wrote notes to every one who might think they had a right to arrest the fugitive wife, begging them to desist from every species of prosecution."—*Second Case for Counsel's Opinion, &c.*, p. 59, idem p. 100.

irretrievably ruined*." "It is no secret that the Count of Saint-Mauris has written to the Procureur Général; he latter, and all the court have said so to every body; nd his evidence, which occupied the commissary and he registering officer for five hours, proves the most leadly hatred †."

This information was accompanied with particulars which it would be useless to transcribe, and at the same time with the most fearful anticipations, which the event very soon justified. On the 10th of May 1777, a judgment of the Bailiwick of Pontarlier, declared Mirabeau "charged and convicted of the crime of "forcible abduction and seduction;" condemning him "to be beheaded, which (so ran the sentence) shall be executed in effigy, upon a portrait ‡." He was condemned moreover, to pay "a fine of five livres to the king, and to forty thousand livres civil compensation and damages to the Marquis of Monnier;" whose wife was condemned "to be confined, during her natural life, in the asylum established at Besançon, there to be shaved and degraded

* Unpublished letter from Mauvaiset to Mirabeau, dated March 25th 1777.

† Unpublished letter from Mauvaiset to Mirabeau, dated March 25th 1777.

‡ This was singularly interpreted by Peuchet, who says, vol. ii. p. 96, that the "portrait of the condemned was fastened to the scaffold." Another pretended biographer, by way of variety, attributes the sentence to the Parliament of Besançon, which, he says, condemned Mirabeau "to be burned in effigy."—*Little Universal Classical Biography*, &c. Paris, Gosselin, 1829, p. 2007.

like the females of that community." The sentence further stated, "that she had forfeited all her rights of community, dower, matrimonial gifts, and other advantages assured to her by her marriage settlement;" adjudging the marriage portion to the husband, and condemning the wife to pay a fine of ten louis to the king, &c. *."

We have recently explained how the place of concealment inhabited by the fugitives was discovered during the proceedings. They were aware of it, but relied with imprudent confidence, upon the persuasion that their legally elected domicile, preserved them from being delivered up †; and it appears that the suc-

* The enacting clause of this judgment is inserted at p. 9 of the documentary proofs printed at the end of the "Second Brief for Counsel's Opinion on Mirabeau's case;" at p. 11 is the procès verbal stating that the effigy mentioned in the judgment, being a painting, was attached to a scaffold erected on the Place des Casernes, of the town of Pontarlier, by Claude-Antoine Chrètien, the public executioner of the county of Burgundy.

† We have evidence of this fact in a letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to his brother, the Bailli, dated April 18th 1782.

"Nothing was easier than to follow them in Holland, where they had a lease signed with their real names, and deposited at the town hall, because they had been told that being thus domiciled, they were free from arrest."

Mirabeau wrote seven months after his arrest: —

"You will be surprised to see my procuration legalised by M. de Clairon (Consul of France). I have adopted this plan, because the privileges of Amsterdam are peculiar, and I have purchased the rights of an inhabitant of that city; these secure me from every species of surprise, because I cannot be arrested without being

cess of the persons in pursuit of them was principally owing to Inspector Brugnières, that police

summoned."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated October 23rd* 1776.

Two months later he spoke, without emotion, of the search that was making for him.

"A police officer has arrived here, who, I believe, has secretly made some inquiries: his labour will be in vain, and does not alarm me."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated Amsterdam, December 23rd* 1776.

"I have just been informed that there is a French officer here, commissioned to demand Sophie; I shall instantly call upon this doughty captain. Do not be under any apprehension—he will go as he came."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 17th* 1777.

"I know not what is become of this formidable negociator, whose attempts they wanted me to fear. I have been unable to discover him; but you may make yourself perfectly easy: I wish I were so respecting your health."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 27th* 1777.

See also, in the Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 160, the indignation of Mirabeau on finding how greatly he was deceived in his expectations.

"Is it in this country, formerly so free, so jealous of its liberty that our misfortunes have been consummated, that we have been arrested in open violation of the rights of nations, and of the laws and constitution of the country!"

Mirabeau probably learnt, at a subsequent period, that his arrest had been effected by surprise, and not for want of protection from the hospitable laws of Holland; for he praised them in the following terms:—

"No citizen can be arrested in his house, even for the most atrocious crime, unless the whole body of the magistracy proceed thither, and thus publicly attest that the accusation is real, and that the accused shall be legally acquitted or condemned. By what magic can such marvellous effects be produced? Through the aid

roué *, who was doubly excited by the hope of gain, and by finding himself put upon his mettle, in consequence of the ill success of his first excursion. He offered his services, before Mirabeau and Sophie had been at Amsterdam six weeks, but his offer was at first declined.

"The other day I found Brugnières here; he came as he said from M. Lenoir; he knew the locality,

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of the law; by its constant, rigid, and inflexible execution. Every citizen knows in this happy country that he is as much a man as the first magistrate; he does not rely upon impunity, but he fears no oppression."—*Lettres de Cachet*, vol. i. p. 226. This paragraph is preceded by unqualified praise of the Dutch police.—*Idem*, p. 223.

By the Marquis's letter, already cited, dated April 18th 1782, we learn that precautions were taken to prevent Mirabeau's adversaries from availing themselves, in the revision of the suit at Pontarlier, of the lease in question, as evidence of the lovers having resided at Amsterdam.

"I know that the Dutch Ambassador, who has withdrawn the lease and every trace of it, that Marshal Duras, Governor of the province (Franche-Comté), and the Prince of Bauffremont, and the whole of the country, who wrote in his favour, did not do it for his handsome person and good renown."

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 9th 1777. A singular fact, which we have already stated in p. 20, is, that this same de Brugnières, after having twice been employed in tracing Mirabeau, and having arrested him once, became his devoted and very useful agent at Vincennes. This fact, which is stated in the published letters, vol. i. p. 36 (preface), 46, 71, 198, 228, 246, 263, 267, vol. ii. p. 291, &c., is also proved by passages in the letters we possess. We do not, however, transcribe these passages here, because the matter is not of sufficient importance.

place of retreat, &c. I sent him back without further ado, saying that I had incurred so much expense, merely to prevent the misfortune of others, that it was now done with, and I could and would go no further. I admire how Providence has forced me to learn their vile cheats, and with what sort of people it makes me hold converse, in this fourth part of my life, having, during the three other parts, avoided rogues with such care! But I have enough of the past; I have been moulting for a long time. Those people wear out, corrode, and burn the very pavement they walk on. Even I do not escape the burning—I, whom they are dragging to the hospital by the hair and by the entrails *."

But whilst the Marquis of Mirabeau pretended to be no longer desirous of pursuing his son, M. and Mde. de Ruffey were taking measures to have their daughter arrested. The Marquis soon made up his mind.

"It was thought that the gentleman had turned Turk, or was gone to be devoured by the Poles, and whichever of these two resolutions he might have adopted, would have elicited public applause. But he was in Holland, subsisting by his pen. As Brugnières was to set out according to a bargain made with him by Madame de Ruffey, to carry off that silly

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 11th 1776.

creature, her daughter, and bring her to a certain place, for which he was to receive a hundred louis if he succeeded, and nothing if he failed, I availed myself of the opportunity, and made a similar bargain, also payable after the fellow had been taken to the place of his destination. I have had no tidings of him since. Are we again duped *?"

They were not duped. As early as the 26th of March the Count of Vergennes offered orders to M. Lenoir, and sent them on the 19th of April †. On the 29th, the same minister invited the Duke of Lavauguyon, ambassador from France to Holland, "to assist M. Brugnières with advice, in regard to the steps he was pursuing to execute his commission, and to get leave of seizure ‡." The Marquis of Mirabeau, being pleased with so much diligence, did not want to know the result, but wrote thus:—

"In former times I had no better tool than a cow-dung; now it is impossible to be more obliged in detail than I feel myself to the prime minister. You saw how we were tossed about under Malesherbes, who nevertheless professed great esteem for me. The moment he was gone, things took quite another turn. Although

* Private letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 11th 1777.

† Letters written in the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 342 343.

‡ Private letter from the Count of Vergennes to M. Amelot, pated April 29th 1777.

ill or convalescent, and forced to write from this place (Noissy), I was immediately attended to, for every order I required, whether for France, or abroad *."

With this powerful support from government, success could not be long delayed.

"I learned yesterday that the wretch has been immured, and is in irons. You may judge how much help it has required, and how much trouble and expense it has occasioned, to have these people captured in a foreign country, where they had become naturalised †. The note received by M. Lenoir, and written by M. de Sartine, explains that the delinquents were arrested by order of the States General (of Holland) ‡. The brave Brugnières has performed his mission like an old fox, like a most cunning trepanner; leaving me to emerge, like harlequin, as well as I can, with the help of money, which is the constant sauce to all the bones I have been obliged to swallow. The loss sustained by

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 26th 1777. It is manifest that the Marquis was satisfied with this administration; the former had displeased him as much.

"Malesherbes and his colleagues," said he, "put me in mind of those great gourds which have been hollowed out and a lighted candle put into them."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 16th* 1781.

† A particular circumstance serves to heighten the atrocity of this remark. Mirabeau was ill when taken into custody. See Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. ii. p. 9.

‡ Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated May 31st 1777.

such commissions is dreadful, especially now that every strong box seems tied with a girdle of chastity; and it is all one whatever steps a man may take, for you know that these good people have a thousand means of fleecing you. They are, moreover, well backed by their superiors, who do not expect them to serve merely for the cross of Saint Louis *."

The Marquis cherished another thought, which presented itself to his mind for the third time.

" My wish would have been, had it been feasible, to deliver the wretch into the hands of the Dutch, and have him sent to their spice colonies, where he must have spent the remainder of his life, for there is no returning from them. If he were hanged there, it would be *incognito;* for after all the best of us is mortal;—and, if he survives us both, he has sense enough to keep himself out of a madhouse, and yet enough of folly and villany to disgrace the name he bears. I had even made interest among the High Mightiness who rule in India. The reply was that such a thing could be done only in the case of very young, and unmarried people, who were mere vagabonds. So I have shut him up, against the advice of every body, who continually urged me to let him take his own chance. My conscience, which I daily consult, whispered to me that independently of the innumerable sins he com-

* Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 9th 1777.

mits, his chance would be to be pummelled to death under our name; and it was not for such an end that our ancestors transmitted this name to us, with all its honours. Besides, he would soon retort upon me and mine, with all his power of intrigue, his fatal talents, his age, his morals, his profligacy, the money of his victims, and the support of his worthy confederates, in a city where the most disorderly and immoral deeds are freely forgiven. So that, with regard to him, and notwithstanding time, which unfortunately conceals and dissipates every thing, and the fools who assert that 'the king will not permit an imprisonment for life from family motives, when he scarcely ever does so from reasons of state,' my plan is absolutely formed, and none but the government and myself shall know his situation. When I die, a sealed note shall instruct my successor *."

We do not here insert any needless commentary, for this language is too plain, and suggests too many reflections, for the reader to require further assistance. But we must observe, that the Marquis of Mirabeau—

"Niggard in good, prodigal in evil,"

did not hesitate to encounter the "dreadful ruin"

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1777.

brought on by many law-suits, which elsewhere * he estimates at upwards of 20,000 francs, whereas, four years before, being able to pay his son's debts, instead of involving him in the discouragement and disgrace of an interdiction, and throwing him into a prison, where all his greater faults originated, he offered only 18,000 francs † to liquidate a sum, which at various times he

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* Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated October 19th 1777.

"Although it cost me 20,000 francs to run after him, &c.; yet, when time has dried it, the riddance will not have been too highly paid."

Six weeks previously he wrote to the Marquis of Marignane:—

"His imprisonment has cost me 18,600 francs already."—*Letter dated October 5th* 1777, inserted in the "Brief and Counsel's Opinion in the Case of the Countess of Mirabeau, &c.;" J. Mouret, 1783, 162 pp. 4to.

† Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 311. Mirabeau had already written:—

"My father has been ridiculous enough to offer my creditors 18,000 francs, merely to be refused."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated October 19th* 1776.

This extraordinary fact would be too gross for belief were it only asserted in a simple letter, without any contradictory evidence. But it is placed beyond a doubt, by its appearing in a statement written in the Bailli's presence, and, in a manner, under the eye of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

"However it be, my father offered the Count of Grasse du Bar 18,000 francs to liquidate my debts. This sum could not liberate me. The remainder of my liabilities would have remained loaded with usury; and the payment of the interest alone would have devoured my income. What would have followed this part payment? I should still have been in the greatest difficulties,

estimated at 170,000*, at 200,000, and at 400,000 francs, and which did not really exceed 60 or 70,000, as Mirabeau constantly told him †, and as is proved in a letter written by a witness, and a stern opponent.

" Let them say what they like, he (Mirabeau) must know, and so do we, that all his debts, taken at their real value, do not amount to 70,000 francs ‡."

Let us insert, moreover, as a specimen of character, two passages in which the Marquis absolves himself, and glories in his cruel success.

" When any wish of mine is not forbidden by my conscience, I have means in hand to gratify it. Depend upon it, that at Babylon, Antioch, and Paris, none but poor, pitiful fathers ever forgave contempt for their authority; and, since there no longer exists any special court for family pleadings, we must chastise our children by means of the savage despotism of ' lettres de cachet,' and not by the slow and tedious formality of blind and pedantic justice. When people used to praise me above measure, I only shrugged up my shoulders; but now they attempt to cry me down,

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and been driven to fresh expedients. My father would have said— ' I paid his debts once, and he has begun again.' "— *Observations on a Defamatory Libel*, &c.

* Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 326.

† Ibid., vol. i. p. 191—326; vol. ii. p. 33; vol. iii. p. 51.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated November 2nd 1778.

my internal feelings bear me up, and resist all their efforts to crush me. I know that I pass among them for the Nero of the age; that the women reserve for me the fate of Orpheus, and the lawyers that of Romulus. But what matters it? If I were sensitive I should have died long ago. Let them vainly strive to rend the cuirass of honour which overspreads me, and is now too hard and too sound to give way under their feeble blows. The public are not my arbiters. I trample upon their stupid decrees, emitted by affected passions, and though I respect my sovereign and the law, I fear nothing but my own conscience. So long as my health and spirits last, I will play the part of Rhadamanthus, if it please God. Thus I face about to meet them, for if I once turn my back, they will be sure to make a desperate onset.

" But to come to the point. I wanted to gain my cause, and I have gained it. I wanted to shut up these two mad fools, and they are shut up *. I wanted to immure this wild rascal of mine, and he is immured. As for the barking of the Course †, it will not last a week. However, I presume it is neither in your presence, nor in your hearing, that people talk of your

* His wife and younger daughter, Madame de Cabris, were kept prisoners at the Convent of the Dames de Sisteron, from the 14th of February 1778, to the 10th of June 1781.

† The principal public walk at Aix, where the Bailli of Mirabeau used to spend the winter.

family affairs. Four days ago I fell in with Monpezat, whom I had not seen for twenty years, and whose stupidity drew upon him the following smart repartee:—

" ' Is your suit with the Marchioness at an end?' said he.

" ' I have won it, Sir.'

" ' And where is she now?'

" ' In a convent.'

" ' And your son, where is he?'

" ' In a convent.'

" ' And your daughter * ?'

" ' In a convent.'

" ' Have you taken upon yourself then to people convents?'

" ' Yes, Sir, and if you were a son of mine, you should have entered one long ago †.' "

After reading this singular dialogue, we cannot help calling to mind an expression as bitter as it was true, which, about the same time, was addressed by Mirabeau to his father.

" You have brought up all your children, but one ‡, under the influence of fear, as if their veins had been filled with the blood of slaves §."

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* Madame de Cabris.

† Private letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 26th 1778.

‡ Madame du Saillant.

§ Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. ii. p. 197.

We must not forget that the Marquis of Mirabeau, so despotic in his own family, still gave himself out as the "Friend of Men," and proclaimed his feelings, which were really sincere. Here is a proof of his sincerity. It occurred within a week or two of the events just related.

He had gone to drink the spa waters of Mont d'Or, whence he wrote thus :—

"When you say that the Mont d'Or was formerly another fountain of youth for me, I am led to believe that you have not closely examined it.

"'There are,' says the miller, 'no more calves at my age.' I could say much worse, if I durst say all. At all events, in spite of my great aversion to play the frog, especially at these baths, which resemble those of Dante, here I am; and, moreover, without feeling any pain or sickness, drinking with benefit, and exercising myself on the only platform in this part of the country, a walk which I formerly laid out * myself, which bears my name, for which the disabled praised me, and which these savages have half destroyed. Oh! Madam, what fine stories I could tell you, if I had not twenty letters to answer, on sad business! I would give you a description of the native festival of the place, which took place on the 14th. The savages came down in

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated August 18th 1777.

large bands from the hills, and all our people were ordered to stay at home. The priest in his surplice and stole; the justice with his wig; the horse patrol with their swords drawn, keeping the ground, before the bagpipes were allowed to play; the dance, after lasting half an hour, giving way to a grand fight; the cries and shrieks of the children, invalids, and others encouraging the combatants as the mob do fighting-dogs; these frightful men, more like wild beasts, clad in coarse woollen coats, with large leather bands, studded with brass nails, their lofty stature being still more raised by their thick wooden shoes, standing too on tiptoe to look at the fight, beating time with their feet, rubbing their sides with their elbows; such ghastly faces, covered with long greasy hair; the top of the face turning pale, whilst the bottom was distorted into a savage grin, showing a kind of fierce impatience;—yet these people pay tallage, and are to be deprived of salt! Ministers do not know whom they plunder, whom they think to rule; whom, with the scribbling of their dull, unmeaning pens, they hope to starve with impunity till the catastrophe comes. Exhibitions like these recall some fine thoughts! 'Poor Jean Jacques!' said I to myself, 'the man who could have sent you and your system to copy music among such people, would have made a harsh reply to your discourse.' On the other hand, these thoughts were consolatory to a man who has dedicated his whole life to preach the cause of the

poor, and the urgency of general education; and at the same time has pointed out what species of instruction must be given, to constitute the only barrier between oppression and revolution, the only infallible treaty of peace which can endure between might and weakness. Ah! Madam, if this game of blind man's buff lasts much longer, there will be a general upset *."

Return we now to Mirabeau and Sophie. They were arrested at Amsterdam on the 14th of May 1777, by Inspector Brugnières *. Biographers, often careless,

* Cadet Gassicourt says, in the second edition of his Notice, p. 13, "To resist tyranny, and face it boldly, was always the first thought of Mirabeau. Some one had informed him that a certain Brugnières, who frequented the same tavern, was a police agent, sent to arrest him. Instead of hiding himself, or making off, he went up to the table where the officer was sitting, and took a seat there with a lofty look."

This anecdote is true; and here follows Mirabeau's own version of it:—

"I have only a moment left, my dear mother, to relate to you a most singular incident. M. Brugnières has arrived, and I had instant intimation of the circumstance. It so happened that he was lodging at the same tavern as the Counts of Luigné and Quelen, who, you most likely know, have left France for America, to join the insurgents. I went to sup at this tavern on purpose to see this Brugnières. Luigné, and Quelen recognised me there, but I gave them a hint, and they began the attack by very clear though indirect inuendos. Brugnières was dull enough to incite them openly by taking their allusions to himself, denying, however, both his profession and his name. I think they would have felled him to the ground without my interference; as it was, they kicked him out of the tavern. This man was recommended to a merchant of this city, who has

and sometimes misinformed, have stated that these orders related only to Sophie, and not to her lover, who was at liberty to stay in Holland. But that the contrary is the fact, we have proved by the extracts just given.

We possess, in truth, no other account of this arrest, but Mirabeau's :—

" The government applied for our arrest, and I was informed of it; a thousand ties detained me; a silly bashfulness induced me not to speak to my friends, for I had made some, until it was too late. They advised me instantly to rid myself of some debts; but the time was past.

On the day of my arrest, I received three different intimations from people in office, that I should be taken the next day. Fatal mistake! I must not charge it to them as an act of treason; they were compelled to act. The French consul came and offered me money, a passport, and even absolute freedom, if I would give

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espoused his quarrel, and whom we have not spared; yet the rogue has friends and influence enough to give me some uneasiness."—*Private letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated May 1st* 1777.

" M. Brugnières, after having been expelled from two or three taverns, is still here; and, it is said, with orders to carry off Sophie. The military reception he met from us, and the consequences which might ensue, have perplexed me not a little, and I have taken fit measures to obviate them. What else ought I to do?—wait till the bomb-shell falls, and bury it?"—*Letter from the same to the same, dated May 5th* 1777.

up Madame de Monnier*. They all kept out of her sight. Alas! had she known it, I should have had other prayers to reject. That very night we had fixed upon for our flight. This heroine, so loving, so brave and so good, was calm and serene; but would not go out before me. Only one minute more would have saved her. I had already left the house; a friend was to have escorted her by another way, for we were afraid to appear together. I heard that she was arrested. Just heaven! Sophia arrested! I hesitated not a moment what to do: it was my duty, with the feelings and principles I professed, to be both happy and miserable as her fate might be. I surrendered myself to the wretch who had orders to bring me back 'alive or dead †.' Had my principles been equally ferocious, he might have wept over his victory ‡."

It has been published §, that Sophie, at the moment of her arrest, attempted to take poison. This fact

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* From what has preceded, it is evident that this offer could only have been suggested by the party himself, and from personal regard, since the order of arrest extended to Mirabeau as well as to Sophie.

† We have previously shown that this inhuman alternative was never uttered; there must therefore be either error or exaggeration in this passage.

‡ Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 408.

§ Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. See the Preliminary Discourse, p. 25; Peuchet, vol. i. p. 234; Cadet Gassicourt, p. 18 in the first edition, and 14 in the second; Chaussard, p. 38, edit. 1797, &c.

is proved beyond a doubt by the assertion of Mirabeau himself:—

"When Madame de Monnier was arrested at Amsterdam, the thought of leaving me brought on a fit of the darkest despondency. She resolved to put an end to her life, and wrote to me by an indirect channel, stating that she would do so. My head and heart, which were as troubled as her own, had inspired me with the same project; but there was a warning voice that told me she was pregnant. I therefore informed M. Brugnières of her intention. He very prudently exerted himself to win Madame de Monnier's confidence, and restore her in some degree to tranquillity. He thought that the best, if not the only way to bring this about, was to make use of me in so difficult a task. He took charge of our open letters; and promised Madame de Monnier an interview with me, on condition that she gave him the opium she carried about her. This proceeding had the desired effect. I had no difficulty in reminding this affectionate and feeling woman, of her duty to her child. She promised not to pursue her project; but at the same time swore that after a certain time, if she had neither means nor hopes of hearing from, or writing to me, she would find a sure way to escape from slavery and grief *.

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 283. An allusion is made to this dreadful purpose in the following pas-

We have likewise, a great number of other proofs which establish Sophie's intention of committing the rash act, by which, twelve years after, she ended her days. We shall have occasion to speak of it by and by when the order of dates obliges us to dwell a little on this catastrophe, for the purpose of refuting those writers

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sages from two letters written by Sophie to Mirabeau. In the first she expresses her grief at not having received any letter from him.

"By leaving us in ignorance of each other's fate, do they want to remind us of the period we have fixed upon to end our woes?"—*Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 21st 1777.*

In the second she gives Mirabeau an account of the arrangements made preparatory to the judgment by default. She also states what was said by a female servant.

"She affirms that on seeing you hesitate to depart, I told you that if you did not go, or if they arrested me, I was determined to swallow the contents of a small packet which I showed you, containing poison; that you asked me to give you up this packet, and I refused."—*Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 10th 1780.*

In the same letter, written seventeen days after the death of their child, she says:—

"O my treasure! our child has no more need of us! If this wean you from life, if existence become hateful, only say so—I am ready!"

We might mention other letters, one, for instance, dated July 24th 1777, from which we shall presently borrow a fragment. Among the numerous proofs which present themselves, we find the following passage in the "Correspondence from Vincennes:"—

"Take heed how you injure both love and nature, by the crime of despair; for, during your passionate fits of tenderness, you have often sworn not to survive me. Were you then a mother? No, you were not."—*Original Letters from Vincennes*, vol. iv. p. 300.

who have been unjust enough to make Mirabeau the immediate cause of the event.

It has also been said*, that Mirabeau basely attempted to escape, whilst Brugnières was laying hands on Sophie—an odious falsehood, which the account just given would have refuted, had not Sophie herself denied it before.

"Alas! it was in my sight, it was when thou wert with me that they took thee. The danger lay near Sophie; for had you fled, there was none for you. But your delicate sensibility would not let you fly, and forsake a friend, whom you could no longer assist. Ah! there needed not this new tie to bind Sophie to her Gabriel†."

It appears that Brugnières had received instructions to conduct his fair prisoner to Sainte Pélagie, a receptacle for women of corrupt morals and lost reputation. Sophie knew this, and spoke vehemently on the subject, as we may see by the following sentence:—

"It is a place in which your beloved must necessarily have died‡."

The agent of police who, in this instance, evinced both good sense and good feeling, wrote on the 24th

* In a pamphlet, entitled "Reflections on the Denunciation of Stock-jobbing." Paris, 1788.

† Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated July 23rd 1777.

‡ Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 10th 1777.

of May, from Amsterdam, to M. Lenoir, to propose another place of confinement, urging the disconsolate state of his captive, her high birth, and the rank of her husband, who was not aware of the orders which had been given *. On the same day the ambassador Duke of Lavauguyon wrote—

" I cannot refrain from appealing to your sensibility with regard to the grievous situation of Madame de Monnier; a young woman, whom a violent passion has hurried away and spell-bound, but who seems conscious of all her errors †."

This nobleman had before given her proofs of sympathy, which we mention merely to corroborate what we have said respecting the conduct of the two fugitives whilst in Holland.

" The Duke of Lavauguyon," said Sophie, " who came to visit me in prison at Amsterdam, would not, with the rank he held, have taken notice of a woman unworthy of regard. He can tell you what my conduct was in Holland; so can the French Consuls and Agents at Amsterdam and Rotterdam, who knew us both ‡."

" Sophie," replied Madame de Ruffey to her, " do not deceive yourself. If the Duke of Lavauguyon paid

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 345.

† Idem, p. 348.

‡ Unpublished letter from Sophie to Madame de Ruffey, dated June 19th 1777.

visits to both of you, in Holland, it was only from respect for the husband of the one, and the father of the other*. This visit might likewise have been prompted by curiosity to see a heroine of romance†."

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* This last assumption is erroneous.

"They say that the French minister, at the Hague, has received orders to keep his eye upon me. And here I may observe, that the Duke of Lavauguyon is our present ambassador, and is daily expected. Formerly, when Duke of Saint Mégrin, he had some differences with my father; after having proclaimed himself my father's disciple and friend, he not only forsook, but ridiculed him. See whether you can make any use of him for me, by means of letters of recommendation, or in any other way."— *Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated October* 23*rd* 1776.

We know for certain that the Duke of Saint Mégrin had been connected with the political economists.

"I have to announce to you the visit of an illustrious young nobleman, who will do me the honour to look at my estate on his way to Provence. This letter will be delivered to you by the young Duke of Saint Mégrin, an excellent person, author of the 'Letters to the Abbé Mably,' which you read in the last volumes of the 'Ephémérides.'"— *Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August* 3*rd* 1768.

The Duke of Saint Mégrin was son of the Duke of Lavauguyon, governor of the grandchildren of Louis XV. His father had instructed him to treat with the Economists relative to the dedication of the "Ephémérides;" the rejection of this dedication was chiefly owing, as we have already noticed (in the first volume of this work), to the ungovernable pride of birth and of sect shown by the Marquis of Mirabeau. It is therefore easy to conceive that a rupture, or at least a coolness, might have ensued; and that the Duke of Saint Mégrin, as a man and a courtier, was likely to lay hold of so fair an opportunity to ridicule the haughty leader of the Economists.

† Unpublished letter from Madame de Ruffey to Sophie, dated July 22nd 1777.

Sophie persisted. "He must be romantic indeed then, for he showed towards the 'hero and heroine of romance,' the most tender concern, offered them his own recommendation, for want of a better, and mingled his tears with theirs *."

On Sophie's arrival at Paris, she was placed in the establishment of M^lle^ Douay, who kept a sort of house of correction in the Rue de Charonne. Her assumed name of Madame de Courvière † was entered there.

"As every body here bears none but her Christian name, I am called Sophie, a name you have taught me to love so fondly ‡."

Besides the tortures inflicted upon this young woman, whose guilt was not equal to her misery, the most vexatious restraint was imposed upon her in an abode which prepared her for a prison.

"Here we are quite close to Ménilmontant. I can see it from my window. But no one enjoys a prospect here; the house is dreadful §. There are as many as seven persons in one room, and four in mine. I cannot write except in my bed with the curtains drawn ||. So

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Madame de Ruffey, dated July 30th 1777.

† The name of an estate belonging to the Marquis of Monnier.

‡ Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 10th 1777.

§ Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 13th 1777.

|| Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated July 9th 1777.

that if we had been able to foresee these difficulties, we might have laid in a stock of paper, and pens and ink. Never use tobacco instead of ink, rather use Indian ink; that is what I employ. You may likewise put nails into vinegar; they rust and make a yellow ink *."

Whatever may have been the anguish of her mind, in prison, Sophie endured it without murmuring, in the hope of hearing from Mirabeau.

" M. Lenoir is so kind, so humane! he tells me to trust to him; but he must assist us both! Were he willing to serve none but me, I should reject his offers. Ah! 'tis the kindness shown to my Gabriel that affects me †!"

" I live but in expectation of your letters. Every day I see means of escaping. Fastenings always relax in course of time; the garden walls are not higher than those I once leaped from; but, if flight were ever so easy, if every door were open, I would not go out. Alas! I should not be able to fly to your dungeon! And without you whither could I go?—where should I be surer of receiving your letters than here? Let them but reach me, and I shall not repine even in captivity! I could even kiss my fetters at such a price ‡!"

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* Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 13th 1777.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 19th 1777.

‡ Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated July 6th 1777.

Before we conclude the present book, we must endeavour to atone to our readers for the blanks we have been obliged to leave unfilled, as regards the events and correspondence belonging to the time which the fugitives spent in Holland.

Several passages in the collection from Vincennes*, the prefaces to two works published by Mirabeau in 1784 and 1788†, and a number of letters in our possession, make it manifest that, at Amsterdam, at Rotterdam, at Leyden, and at Dordrecht, he had become intimate, not only with the savans and literati, but also with many citizens, whose taste led them to study politics, and to active philanthropic speculations.

In France, Mirabeau had been received at an early age into the brotherhood of Freemasons. This circumstance had enabled him to visit a Dutch lodge; and it appears that, either spontaneously, or in compliance with a request, he intended to propose an establishment of which we have the plan, written not in his own hand-writing, for he left but a few unconnected autograph notes on the subject, but in that of an amanuensis employed by him for several years, and who probably copied the original manuscript.

This production bears evidence of having been written by Mirabeau. It contains his opinions, his

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* See, among others, p. 222, vol. iv.

† Doubts on the Freedom of the Scheldt, and the Address to the Batavians.

principles, and his very style, which is the more easily recognised, because he never sought to disguise or vary it. This is not, we admit, a work of deep reflection, or superior merit. But we think that others will see in it as we do, the most noble and benevolent intentions, and just principles; and will admit that gratitude is due to the writer, a fugitive, and a wanderer, for the voluntary penance which made him devote himself to the good of all, as an indemnity for the injury he had done to a few. This production will also be viewed with a mixture of wonder and concern, as a fresh proof of the talents and generosity of a man, made up of good and evil passions, who sought in the meditations of philanthropy, a little relaxation from domestic anxiety, remorse, and imminent danger. We therefore give it a place here.

PLAN

OF AN INTIMATE ASSOCIATION TO BE ESTABLISHED IN THE ORDER OF FREEMASONRY, WITH A VIEW TO RESTORE THAT ORDER TO ITS GENUINE PRINCIPLES, AND MAKE IT TEND EFFECTUALLY TO THE GOOD OF MANKIND: DRAWN UP, IN 1776, BY B. MI——, NOW SURNAMED ARCESILAUS.

Preamble.

"Those who without insight into the principles of the order of Freemasons, and without enthusiasm, enter that brotherhood, from mere curiosity, or from

motives of interest, are generally but little satisfied, and often forsake it, unless the charms of society, or other considerations, induce them to remain. But how widely different must those men think who, after deep reflection, discover the usefulness, the greatness, and the respectability of one universal bond, the ramifications of which, extending to every land, have linked together a great number of enlightened people, most of them of superior birth, fortune, and education, in an institution whose object is to direct all minds to the knowledge of nature's universal creator, to the primitive connection of fraternity and equality which exists among all men, and to the consequent duty of succouring one another, and labouring for the welfare of the whole human race —a duty constantly acknowledged by religion, and by all our discourses and actions.

" Such as are sensible of all this ought not to heed a few unpleasant blemishes. Though they may grieve to witness the little use that has been made of means so sublime, so noble, and so admirable, they ought, nevertheless, to endeavour at least to maintain this institution, to the utmost of their power; so that, if it be not their happy lot to see the day when it shall produce all the fruits expected from it, future generations, at least, may be enabled to work out for the general good of mankind the valuable means which it affords.

" Thus, how little conformable soever a brother may

find the actual state, either of the whole order, or of his particular lodge, to the notions which his private information has enabled him to form of the use of the O., and its possible results, still it is his duty neither to abandon it himself, nor to dissuade candidates from becoming members. If it prove that, in some places, nothing more is done than a little charity to the poor—if in other places what is done has no effect on human welfare—and if even, as is often the case, immaterial things are effected by great powers, which might have been applied to purposes infinitely more beneficial and determinate, had they not been checked by ignorance, narrowness of mind, short-sightedness and personal interest:—still he should not murmur, but comfort himself by saying, that this charity towards the B. is of itself something noble, and worthy of respect; that the little which is done for mankind, though frequently misapplied, is always interesting, and worthy of admiration; that it is an important example of what the O. might do if it were to exert itself, and of what it will do when knowledge and philanthropy, its natural consequences, have become more diffused; but that all this good would be suspended and could not go on, if erroneous notions and culpable impatience led the choicest spirits to forsake the order, and gradually to occasion its dissolution. It is only by keeping alive the enthusiasm of the B., and binding them still more

closely together, that the great object of the institution can be effected.

If the heart of a B. is capable of "love for his neighbour," if he is not infected with that social pestilence, that cold spirit of selfishness, which, as it considers nothing but the present moment, is entirely foreign to every real emotion of the heart, whether for virtue, or for fame, these ideas will bind him to the O., make him espouse all its interests, and induce him to perpetuate its true principles and uses, by inculcating them in the most persuasive manner to others, especially to new B., as well by language as by example. These opinions and feelings will prompt him to overlook the little defects he may perceive in every lodge, owing to the foolish measures adopted every day from want of knowledge, generosity, wisdom, and virtue among most of the brotherhood.

The frivolity, and folly of the Athenians did not prevent Demosthenes, Phocion and other celebrated citizens belonging to that republic, from continuing to serve it till their deaths. Such were the ideas of the greatest men of former ages, with regard to their country; such, too, should be the ideas of an enlightened B. with regard to the O.

Nevertheless, the human intellect is becoming more and more enlightened, and man, so long pent up within the limits of sordid selfishness, by the despotic

power of governments, now begins to entertain more extensive views and feelings, and to watch more carefully over the common interests of his race. All this is due to the intolerable burden of the very power which had deteriorated the springs of their minds. The time is come for the most enlightened and high-minded B. to collect their strength, and turn the O. by degrees towards that goal which it may reach, and thereby become able to contribute with full efficiency, when opportunities offer, to the happiness of all, including even those who are not B. For such a purpose it would be proper to form an association of the most virtuous, humane, and enlightened B., taking for its groundwork the following principles :—

Principles of the intimate Association of B.

1st. The object of this institution is to labour most effectually to the one object of the order of Free-Masonry : THE GOOD OF ALL MANKIND.

To effect this object, we must rightly understand the means of its attainment.

First: the happiness of each individual depends upon the degree of wisdom and virtue which the Supreme Being has conferred upon him. No society can compel any man to be wise and virtuous : such a project would be chimerical. But we may bring the means of acquiring wisdom and virtue within the reach of many men ; this

is a result which human society should pursue eternally, for, by dint of perseverance, it may be obtained.

" Such is the nature of wisdom and virtue, that to make a profession of them is advantageous to those who possess them. If many think otherwise, it is because they have not sense enough to see this truth, or because having at the outset imbibed false notions, they are become incorrigible, and it will remain hidden from their view.

The proper way, therefore, to make men wise and virtuous, is first to enlighten them; and this should be done more especially when they are young.

The primary basis of the exertions of this institution, one of the great principles upon which its rules should be founded, is a resolution to extend to the utmost the circle of knowledge, not so much in depth as in surface.

I explain myself:—

The labours and exertions of this institution should not be employed in scientific research. For the rewards which hardly ever fail to attend discoveries in science are sufficient to engage the pursuit of men of learning.

Nevertheless, if the members of the institution either individually or collectively, can, without detriment to more important matters, give encouragement to useful discoveries, they may do so without swerving from the spirit of the O.

Their main object should be to diffuse among the people those facts and that useful knowledge already revealed to many privileged persons. This would prove the most effectual means of enlightening and improving the human race.

To defective education must be attributed the ignorance of people of all conditions, except a few master spirits, and those to whom literature is a profession. Ignorance lures many into vice, and many more into a course of dissipation, always attended with aberration of intellect, whereby they become incapable for ever of thinking, or of following any useful employment.

This irrational education induces a hatred of science, makes its acquirement almost impossible, and prevents nine hundred and ninety nine people in a thousand, from addicting themselves to reading, the habit of which generates that of thinking, and by arming the mind against the tedium of life, preserves us from a thousand vices and misfortunes.

Means must therefore be found to amend the system. The institution should therefore undertake to examine and encourage every new discovery pertaining to the subject, and to practise and cause to be practised all those which sound reason, joined to experience, may show to be well adapted for the diffusion, more beneficially than heretofore, of true and useful knowledge, and for facilitating its acquirement to all men.

Thus, the introduction of reason, good sense, and

sound philosophy into the education of every class of men, is the primary object of this society.

Let us come to the second point.—If we imagine a race of men endowed with all the wisdom and virtue which can spring from a good education, we shall see that this is not enough to make them happy. A very wise, and very virtuous man would be very wretched, if he had either the gout or the stone. He would not suffer so much as a maniac or a vicious man with the same complaints; but he would be wretched notwithstanding.

It is true that the projected society could never undertake to set bounds to the physical effects which the maker of all things has mixed up with the composition of his work, and which often affect particular persons.

But there are many other obstacles to the happiness which men might enjoy, and these obstacles all proceed from government and legislation. For instance, can it be supposed, that the wisest and most exemplary man can be otherwise than very unfortunate, when he has been torn from his parents, his wife, his children, or his mistress, and sent to be butchered in America *?—when he is a serf bound for ever to the soil, himself and his children with him?—when instead of being able

* This is evidently an allusion to the Hessians, six thousand of whom the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, Frederick II, sold to the English to go and fight against the rebels of North America. This expedition suggested to Mirabeau the idea of the "Advice to the Hessians," a work written in Holland, and of which we shall give an account in Book XIV.

to work to support himself, his family and his cattle, he is liable to average or feudal labour; or when he desires to practise some art which he has studied, and to marry the woman of his affections, but is prevented from doing so, because either he has not money enough to take out a licence from his corporation, or it absorbs his last penny, which ought to be laid out to improve his condition?—or when the smallest pretence shall suffice to have him immured in a prison or put to the rack? In a word, is it possible for a wise and virtuous man to be happy, if he is liable to oppression, exile, imprisonment, and death itself, at the pleasure of any powerful fellow-creature whom he may have displeased?

Thus we have shown that despotism and its results constitute one of the great scourges of humanity. The second great object of the present institution is the correction of the actual system of law and government.

This correction may be special or general, gradual or sudden, secret or open.

This latter species should not enter into the spirit of this institution, because it is contrary to the statutes of the O., and even dangerous to humanity. Ambitious men take advantage of troubled times, to cast another net oftentimes more closely woven, to impose upon mankind another yoke frequently more heavy, and to hurry those who had wished only to remedy present evils, into an opposite abyss.

See Cromwell, see the reigning king of Sweden, who

has urged on his adherents far beyond the limits to which they intended to go.

But this institution will be perfectly able to attempt a gradual improvement in law and government. Such a project is not chimerical. It may, however, be easily understood, that this last and sublime part of the brotherhood's labours ought to be kept secret, and disclosed only to confidential persons. The result would be immense, worthy of all the attention of the O., and worthy of itself.

If any one persisted in asserting that the execution was impossible, to him I would reply that patience, perseverance, and secrecy render every thing possible.

If any member of the institution possesses influence in public affairs, or is even able to urge on those who do possess such influence, he will exert himself to destroy one of the fetters that galls human nature in any particular country or place; another will do the same elsewhere, and thus by degrees, with prudence and good-sense, despotism will find itself circumscribed within the limits of reason and of law.

I will here cite as an instance, a recent and striking example of what a body firmly united and guided by wisdom can achieve; and though this instance is taken from an atrocious institution, it may at least serve to prove the power of time and prudence.

I allude to the institution of the Jesuits. What has it not achieved? The object of the Jesuits was un-

doubtedly to make a burnt offering of the liberty of mankind upon the altar of superstition and despotism, and afterwards to make the two latter minister to their own ambition. They wanted to brutalise the human species and then govern it. Our views are entirely the reverse: they tend to enlighten mankind, to render it free and happy. But we must and ought to attain our end by the same means, and what should prevent us from operating in good what the Jesuits did in evil.

Besides we possess infinite advantages over them. We have no dress, no external rite to distinguish us, no visible chief invested with the power of dissolving our association. At every storm which might threaten us, we could dive and reappear at other times and in other places. We have no interested or ambitious views that might give umbrage. If, with these means, a judicious choice is made in the admission of members, and in the care taken to form them, and instil into them the principles of our association, it is impossible not to succeed. Pythagoras and his disciples formed in that part of Italy called Magna Græcia, an almost similar society. We respect, and justly so, this illustrious B. M. and he may serve as our model.

Having thus stated the principles of this institution, I will hazard a sketch of a few regulations which naturally arise from it, entreating the B. who read them to add their own observations.

REGULATIONS FOR THE PROPOSED ASSOCIATION.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL REGULATIONS.

I. This association shall be entirely engrafted upon that of the order of Free-masons, and therefore intimately connected with it; and none shall become a member of the former, until he has been admitted into the latter.

II. The admission to this institution shall take place with the same description of ceremonies as those observed in the other degrees of the O. The form of admission shall be in unison with the object of the institution, and the rites shall be determined by those brothers who first accede to the plan. These rites when once fixed shall never be changed except by general consent.

III. There shall be two principal degrees. In the first, the initiated shall be informed of the true object of the whole order, THE GOOD OF HUMANITY, and the intention of efficaciously labouring for its attainment. The general system of the association shall be explained, and one of its objects, namely— the intention of reforming and extending the education of mankind, and of protecting with united force every thing that shall tend thereto.

In the second degree, to which none shall be admitted who have not given evident proofs of zeal in pursuit of good, the second object shall be explained, namely—the correcting of law and governments, and the establishment of an equitable liberty among men.

IV. As all the members must be B. M., they must be zealous in that order, not only because it is an excellent school of public spirit, but also in order to acquire the masonic dignities of their lodge, and make the strength of the latter concur, unknown to its general members, in the views of the association, which are also those of the Free-masons. The masonic lodges having at their head members of this association, shall be termed enlightened lodges.

V. The association shall be divided into provinces, after the model of the order, and there shall be a capital in each state, but without possessing any authority. The great undertakings which require a general co-operation of force, shall be decided upon by the majority of votes, first in each lodge of the association, and afterwards in the lodges united. Out of lodge, each member, individually, or several voluntarily united, shall labour to forward the views of the institution among their friends, always giving an account of their proceedings at the metropolitan lodge, which shall inform the other lodges of the same.

CHAPTER II.

QUALIFICATION OF CANDIDATES FOR ADMISSION.

I. It must be a fundamental rule never to allow any sovereign prince whatever to enter the society, were he an angel in virtue. If monarchs were not absolutely excluded, they would infallibly spoil the institution, in the same manner they have spoiled Freemasonry. But noblemen, provided they have become superior to the prejudices generally attributed to that class, would be valuable members of this association, because the point of honour which binds them to their engagements, would render them more attached to it. The fear of losing the esteem of their friends, would make them more punctual in the fulfilment of their duties. Further, the certainty they have, from their birth, of attaining to the most elevated posts, would render them the most efficient members to labour usefully in forwarding the great objects proposed. And let them not fear that in procuring the liberty and happiness of mankind they injure their own interests: for, independently of being themselves the first victims of despotism, they have only to turn their eyes towards England. Have the nobles of that country lost any of their rights, or any of the splendour of their station, because they have not the power of oppression and injustice?—or has the abolition of average labour rendered their estates less productive? Quite the

reverse. Liberty benefits every one, except the despot, and the cruel and unjust man.

II. A candidate must possess either property, or talents that secure him against indigence. Poverty renders a man too liable to undertake any thing that may extricate him from it, to justify his being made acquainted with a project like the present. It must be concealed from an individual in such a situation, or likely hereafter to be so situated.

III. Although probity must be considered an indispensable qualification in a candidate, he must, nevertheless, be also a man of strict propriety of conduct. A prodigal voluptuary squanders and wastes his fortune, however considerable it may be, and finds himself under the necessity of doing many blameable things, in order to repair the effects of his improvidence. He might thus frequently be unable to fulfil his duties in the institution, or might perhaps even injure or betray its best interests.

IV. As prudence is an indispensable qualification, no member shall be admitted under thirty years of age.

V. He must have obtained, in Free-masonry, the three first degrees at least, and must have given, during a lapse of time, not less than three years, by his constant attendance at the labours of one or more lodges, proof of prudence and attachment to the public good.

VI. Independently of probity, an indispensable qualification in a candidate must be firmness. He

must possess a manly and courageous manner of thinking, and a strong feeling of fame and honour. Not that this institution can require great personal sacrifices: if such were the case, it could not exist, on account of its numerous members. But it is impossible to rely on the attachment of a man to his connections, if he be destitute of courage and firmness; and of all characters in the world, that one with which the least is to be accomplished, is the timid and inconsiderate man, were he even, in other respects, endowed with good qualities, and every possible talent.

VII. A candidate must have received a certain education, acquired some knowledge, and be an enlightened man. He must be fond of study, and of discoursing upon serious and useful topics.

VIII. A religious fanatic shall be excluded, *ipso facto*, from the association. Not that it ought to be composed of men without religion—God forbid! But it is essentially necessary, that whilst they adore the supreme architect of nature, with sincerity, and each after his own fashion, they shall not condemn, in any way whatever, those who adore him according to any other mode, provided that mode does not enjoin actions evidently contrary to true morality, and to what is acknowledged and proved to promote the happiness of mankind. In a word, every candidate must be perfectly tolerant, and convinced that religion is an affair between God and each of his individual creatures,

in which no person has a right to interfere, against the will of the party interested. Such shall be the qualifications demanded of the candidates; and if the association is to yield the desired fruits, those regulations must be inflexibly acted upon. Fresh proofs must even be required, whenever a brother shall pass from the first to the second degree of the association, which promotion shall not take place unless it has been remarked that the brother's enthusiasm in favour of humanity has acquired additional energy. If he feel himself displeased at this, he will perhaps withdraw from the institution. But what matters his secession?—and what will he be able to say, that, far from injuring the association, will not redound to its glory? This is not the case with the second degree. An enemy might, however noble his principles, present it under an odious light, dangerous to the members. This is the reason why the choice for this degree must be made with the utmost caution.

CHAPTER III.

DUTIES TO WHICH THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OBLIGE THEMSELVES.

ARTICLE I.—*General Duties.*

I. The members of the association, resident in the same place, shall be united in bonds of friendship, which

is of easy accomplishment, as they all must be of an honourable station in society.

II. Sure signs and words will enable them to recognise each other, and they shall not conceal themselves from those who may prove themselves brothers.

III. There shall not exist any charitable fund in the society, because it is not anticipated that any member can stand in need of it; and because, if, by any extraordinary chance, such should happen to be the case, as all the members are masons, the person so situated might have recourse to their lodges.

It follows from this, that no member of the society shall ask pecuniary assistance from the other members. But they will render reciprocally to each other every service which intimate friends, bound by the most noble obligations, owe to one another.

IV. Above all, they shall accept collectively the trust that may be left to them by a dying B., either for the education or guardianship of his children or other persons. This, however, shall not force them to incur any expense, unless from the natural impulse of their own generosity.

V. The members shall always take care to manage things in such a way, that the papers belonging to the institution may never fall into profane hands.

ARTICLE II.—*Duties of the Brothers of the inferior Degree.*

Independently of the obligation of secresy towards all uninitiated persons, of submission to the laws of the association, and all others of the same nature, they shall engage—

I. To promote by all means in their power the establishment of efficient instructors, particularly for the people.

II. To encourage every new attempt at correcting the present mode of education.

III. To encourage all establishments of public instruction, founded upon good principles, and not upon the pedantic plan, teeming with prejudice, hitherto followed in the education of youth.

IV. To acquire knowledge themselves, by reading good works, by conversing and meditating upon every object of public utility, and especially upon education.

V. Those members who are husbands and fathers, shall engage to superintend the education of their children, the development of their bodily strength, as well as their mental faculties, and to inspire them with those principles which form the basis of the society, and with those virtues without which they would not themselves have been received among its members.

VI. To assist each other reciprocally, in order that

the united forces of the masonic lodges to which they belong, may concur in the same object with themselves.

ARTICLE III.—*Duties of the Brothers of the superior Degree.*

These brothers engage—

I. On their initiation to this degree, and by the most sacred obligations never to quit it nor detach themselves from it, on any pretence whatever, and to whatever height of fortune they may rise; never to cease observing all the obligations contracted in it; always to acknowledge the members, and never to break off their connection with them; for the more they acquire power and influence, the more they will be enabled to fulfil the object of this degree. If a brother is member of the sovereignty of a state, or becomes the minister or favourite of a monarch, he shall employ all his influence to promote the object of the association. He shall, acting however with discernment, inspire his sovereign with his own views of love, humanity and justice. He shall prevent him, as much as lies in his power, from acts of oppression, from yielding to ruinous profuseness, boundless ambition, or insatiable avarice. He shall render to his brethren an account of what he may have done in the pursuit of this plan, in order to receive from them the just meed of praise and esteem of which he shall have proved himself worthy.

II. To abolish, as much as lies in their power, the

slavery of the peasants, the subjection of men to the glebe, the rights of mortmain, and all those rights and customs which degrade humanity, and are remnants of the frightful barbarity of our ancestors.

In explanation of this article, it is necessary to state that the association does not exact supernatural sacrifices of generosity. As these are repugnant to the heart of man, the institution could not exist if such were required. Thus, it is not expected that a nobleman should grant freedom to all his peasants without compensation; but he will certainly derive a much greater advantage from establishing them as small farmers upon their portion of land, than from keeping them always in slavery. The estates, in England, cultivated upon this plan, are infinitely more productive than those of our country, where the peasants are serfs.

III. To concur by all the means in their power in abolishing average labour, upon condition of equitable compensation, the advantage of which is entirely in favour of the lord of the manor, as it has been incontestibly proved.

IV. To concur by all the means in their power in abolishing all craft, corporations, and companies — all impediments, in short, to industry. As every man must work, there must not exist, according to the laws of sound morality, any obstacle to his performance of this duty.

V. To concur by all the means in their power in

abolishing every restraint upon trade, by custom and excise dues, and imposts of every description, by which the farmers of the public revenue seize upon the substance of the nation, without the people knowing how much they give.

VI. To do every thing in their power to diminish the enormous taxes which the unfortunate people are at present obliged to pay.

VII. To make every possible effort to bring about a general tolerance of all religious opinions. Provided a man be useful to the state, of what consequence to the government is his belief? The example of Holland, England, and of the Colonies in America, prove the utility of this principle.

VIII. To use every exertion to abolish all ecclesiastical jurisdictions, diminish the number of priests, where that number is excessive, and wrest every weapon from the hand of superstition.

IX. To endeavour by all the means they possess to circumscribe despotism within narrower and less unjust limits. For Germany, they will labour to maintain the right of the States, and resist arbitrary power, and will spurn all vile motives of interest. As it is impossible to particularise upon this subject, every thing depending upon circumstances, the brothers will consult among themselves, in their assemblies, upon the means of fulfilling their engagements on this head. It shall form the subject of their maturest deliberations.

X. It is with this view that, as the brothers of the inferior degree will read with attention good works upon the education of all classes of men, those of the superior degree shall peruse and meditate upon all productions treating of legislation and government. They shall point out to each other, and jointly seek in them what may be applicable to their own cases.

XI. They shall every where oppose the injustice committed by powerful men; and if they cannot prevent unjust actions, they shall endeavour to proclaim them, and deliver up the authors to the rack of public opinion.

XII. For this purpose they shall support as much as possible the liberty of the press, the strongest barrier against tyranny and oppression; they shall distribute every where those writings which cause umbrage to despotism; they shall also assist the authors, of such productions, if men of talent, and if there is no malice or deception in their conduct.

XIII. In order still more to encourage the members of the association to act with zeal in the fulfilment of the above mentioned engagements to their fullest extent, they shall solemnly swear to assist with all their might those who, through excess of zeal in the performance of their obligations, may fall into misfortune. The names of those who are sufferers in the cause of humanity, shall be communi-

cated to all the B. Their noblest actions shall be made public, in order that they may enjoy the honour they deserve, and they shall be received with esteem by all their brethren. These things shall never fail to be mentioned in all the regular correspondence, between the enlightened lodges and their capital, and also between the different provinces.

Such is the sketch of the plan of an edifice, the details of which may be determined upon, as soon as it is founded.

BOOK VII.

ON the 7th of June 1777, Mirabeau was deposited in the donjon of Vincennes, where his captivity, especially at first, was even much more rigorous * than that of Sophie; and he was harassed by the same regret, the same desires, and the same anguish.

It was at this period that the correspondence commenced from the donjon of Vincennes. From this vast collection of letters have been taken, for thirty years past, the elements of the different accounts of Mirabeau's *private* life.

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* The reader may form an idea of its severity from the following passage, transcribed from a letter published in the collection from Vincennes.

"M. Lenoir was good enough to give orders, on the very day of my arrival at this place, that I should be allowed to write as much as I pleased. But I was for three weeks without paper or books, without even a change of linen, or a comb; nor did any barber make his appearance. Observe also, that during these three weeks, and especially during the first, I had fever and spit blood."—Vol. iii. p. 436.

Mirabeau enters again into these particulars in p. 468 of the same volume.

This correspondence, as we shall presently make it appear, was permitted by M. Lenoir, the lieutenant-general of police, from a feeling of compassion which he was unable to resist, especially when he heard the eloquent complaints of a prisoner like Mirabeau, compared causes with effects, and became convinced that punishment had preceded error, which it had perhaps excited, and that however gross such error, the penalty had been out of proportion.

M. Lenoir, being placed at the head of a great administration, the aptitude and success of which have been much praised, had other interests to attend to besides those of public order. At a time when the absolute power of the throne was altogether transferred to its delegates, the very nature of his appointment made him exercise a kind of secret and domestic police, preservative and tutelary, which rendered him the superintendent, the mediator, and the arbitrator in a multitude of private facts and contentions. Quite as able, though less firm and more moral than Marc René d'Argenson, he, in the fulfilment of his duties, in some measure contributed to elevate and to dignify the police. Often, in the exercise of this delicate part of his office, his moderation and prudence led him to conceal facts, the publication of which would have produced irreparable consequences, or a highly immoral result. He brought back to reason and to honour minds which

had been transiently led astray by their passions. He enlightened in time many erring hearts that would have become perverted. He opportunely frustrated ill-judged attempts which might have degenerated into criminal acts.

M. Lenoir, whose time was nearly absorbed by his numerous occupations, had but little of it to spare for the daily solicitations of Mirabeau. But he was moved, and ultimately vanquished by his prisoner, whom he had seen during the first days of his captivity, and whose natural ascendency increased the sympathy which attaches kindly hearts to such as nobly bear great misfortunes. In the beginning of the year 1778, M. Lenoir charged another with a guardianship which he could not well exercise himself; but he was careful in the choice of this individual, and it proves the kind interest with which Mirabeau had inspired the lieutenant-general of police.

M. Boucher, first clerk of the Secret Department, was rather formal and severe. He was endowed with sound sense rather than a brilliant understanding; but under coldness of manner, he concealed a burning heart which passion had formerly shaken, and which was still occasionally wrought upon by the inspirations of humanity and justice.

This individual, appointed by M. Lenoir to superintend the management of the prisoner, became his

friend *. He was directed to receive, transmit, or withhold any part of the tolerated correspondence. For some time, he rigorously observed the injunctions given to him concerning the number, the intervals, the subjects and the tone of these letters; but, by degrees, he yielded to tender importunities, and was moved by repeated and warm expressions of eloquent gratitude. Perfectly easy in consequence of the resignation evinced by Mirabeau, and from his docility at the slightest warning, M. Boucher soon became more lenient, and ultimately neglected the restrictions which had been imposed. He permitted so many and such long letters to be written, that it may easily be supposed he could not always find time to read them before they were forwarded to their destination. He only required that the originals should be sent back to

* The correspondence from the Donjon of Vincennes contains, as it were on every page, evidence of the services which M. Boucher rendered to Mirabeau, with the greatest zeal and disinterestedness. We have considered due to this excellent man's memory, the transcription of still more special testimony than that in our text—a testimony the less liable to suspicion, as it is addressed to a third person.

"How much is he entitled to my gratitude? Has he not been for a length of time my only support, my only resource, my only comforter? From his most trifling attentions up to the greatest services, has he not constantly evinced the same zeal, the same indulgence, the same complaisance, and the same kindness?"—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Dupont de Nemours, dated December 26th* 1779.

him *, and he scrupulously deposited them in the office boxes, where Manuel, the Procurator of the commune, found them thirteen years after, and took †, or rather stole them—for a public officer commits a theft when he sells or publishes for his own benefit the secret documents officially placed in his charge ‡.

Manuel was not so entirely absorbed by politics, as to be unable to perceive the advantage he could derive from this precious discovery, by making a good speculation for his vanity and cupidity. It flattered his vanity, by making him appear the friend and confidant of a great man, whose posthumous works he was publishing. It ministered to his cupidity, for it promised to turn out a most lucrative book speculation. The publication of such a correspondence was likely to have a run on account of the subject, the period, and Mirabeau's name §.

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* See Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. ii. pp. 89, 366.

† These details, confirmed by public notoriety, are sufficient to give the lie to the impudent falsehood (which we shall presently mention), wherein Manuel states "that MANY of the letters from Vincennes were found UNDER THE RUINS OF THE BASTILLE, some of them at the MAIRIE, and that many were LENT OR SOLD BY FRIENDS OF SOPHIE AND GABRIEL, ALL OF THEM GIVEN BY GABRIEL HIMSELF."—*Preliminary Discourse on the Collection from Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 43.

‡ This is the judgment passed upon the deed by many of Mirabeau's biographers, especially Cadet Gassicourt, 2nd edition, p. 19.

§ Manuel had already made a similar speculation with public

Manuel, hurried on by the enticement of gain, by the political fever which then preyed upon the whole nation, perhaps also by a secret anticipation of his own approaching catastrophe, bestowed no serious care upon the work. He did not even, notwithstanding all that he says to the contrary *, take the trouble to place the dated letters in their exact order, much less to make any research for the dates of those that had none. Wherever there were any gaps in the correspondence, he filled them up with fictitious letters, which he pretends to have been written to Sophie †. When he found incomplete fragments, he often united them at a venture with some where both the period and the subject were different ‡. The consequence is strange nonsense, and

documents, which his office of Communal Procurator had placed at his disposal. He boasts, in the Preliminary Discourse to the Collection of Letters from Vincennes, p. 5, of having published the "Unveiled Police," Paris, 1791, 2 vols. 8vo.

* Pages 5 and 43 of the same Preliminary Discourse. He pretends "to have been a year in collecting, deciphering and arranging them."

This assertion is evidently as false as the whole romance contained in the emphatic and burlesque introduction placed by Manuel at the head of his edition.

† See particularly in the sequel of our narration the notes which have reference to pp. 235—243 of the third volume, p. 144 of the fourth, &c.

‡ See, for instance, the letter, without a date at the beginning, but which has that of August 9th placed in the eleventh page. The real date is August 22nd 1777, and the letter is inserted in the twenty-fifth page of vol. i. of the "Original Letters from the Donjon

inexplicable incoherencies. Forgetting subsequently that he had already inserted isolated fragments, he actually placed them again elsewhere, often using them twice and even three times *. Nay, more: having made stupid interpolations of these genuine fragments, Manuel often added forged ones, and we are able to prove, by some of the originals which we have in our possession, that such a commencement, or such a conclusion, or such a piece taken from the body of a printed letter, is mere invention, and can only have been fabricated by the editor †.

These faults of hasty publication, and interested precipitation, might easily be forgiven, when it is considered, on the one hand, that Manuel was absorbed by the political storm raging around him, which was about

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of Vincennes." In the first lines Mirabeau talks of the "dreadful silence which has reigned round us DURING NEARLY TWO MONTHS," and on the other side of the leaf are these words: "you may see by what I have written to you FOR EIGHT MONTHS PAST." Now, on the 9th of August, only two months had elapsed since the incarceration of the two prisoners.

See a similar inaccuracy, exposed by a similar contradiction of dates, p. 120 of the same volume, &c. &c.

* We shall merely give a single instance: let our readers take the trouble to look at pages 173 and 403 of vol. i. and p. 365 of vol. ii. and they will find the same paragraph repeated three times word for word.

† We find a kind of acknowledgment of this in a sentence of the Preliminary Discourse already quoted, p. 5.

"I have sometimes been obliged to feel as he did, to GUESS what I no longer saw."

to destroy him; and, on the other hand, that he was perhaps influenced by his engagement with the publisher, whose typography, full of inaccuracies and ignorance, is truly worthy of such an edition.

But what Manuel cannot be pardoned for, is the cynical carelessness which blinded him respecting the inexcusable fault, equally odious and unnecessary, of publishing the entire text of several of these letters,—which he had purloined for his own benefit.

He was, no doubt, anxious, after a long oblivion, to bring to light this unpublished correspondence, full of passion and eloquence, and so remarkable for the colouring and vigour of a most original style, replete with interesting facts, bold views on literature, politics, and philosophy, all which it was curious to meet with in Mirabeau's intimate and secret correspondence. At this nobody could feel surprised, nor be induced to find fault with the editor; for his speculation, though mean and sordid, would never have been condemned by the public, which became enriched with so interesting and valuable a book. But there was no necessity for inserting in those letters the allusions and obscene descriptions which sully their pages, or distressing and disgraceful domestic details. What was the use of making an indignant public privy to the exaggeration and errors of a master-spirit, led astray by the feverish excitement, the two-fold intoxication of love and anger? What was the use of repeating, even to loathing, those

furious and insane invectives uttered by a son against the father who held him captive?—by a husband deserted, and perhaps betrayed by a giddy woman?—by a brother angry with a sister *, who had abandoned him after having thrown him off his guard?—against another sister†, whom he supposed to have wronged him, but who never ceased to protect and to serve him, though he knew it not?—by a lover against a husband‡, and against a mother §, whose peace and happiness he had ruined? Why expose the hideous scene of domestic strife, or the accusations of tyranny, bad conduct, debauchery, and even incest, brought by a son against a father, by a father against a son, by a husband against a wife, by a brother against a sister? Why trumpet forth in the public streets so many deplorable secrets, generally concealed in the obscurity of private life ||? Why confide the existence of so much

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* Madame de Cabris. † Madame du Saillant.

‡ The Marquis of Monnier. § Madame de Ruffey.

|| Mirabeau's family did not forget what they owed to the illustrious deceased, to themselves, and to public decency. The revolutionary sequestration was already enforced on all the effects of the family, on account of the emigration of Viscount Mirabeau, Madame de Cabris, and Count du Saillant. This Count's mother took, nevertheless, the most active measures to prevent the publication of the "Letters from Vincennes." It may be seen in the postscript of the Preliminary Discourse by Manuel, with what presumptuous emphasis he speaks of the "OFFENCE committed by the municipal administrator who, accompanied by four or five men of the law, under military escort, presented himself,

turpitude to implacable poli
panegyrists, or to famished
upon a name justly renowned.
scandal? Why, finally, mix up
otherwise calculated to please,
instruct? We do not fear to
crime, which we can only attri
the times, and to the vilest of sp
of increasing the number of volu
in four volumes, which alarms
grieves the great man's admirers
decency, and corrupts ignorant and
if judiciously reduced to three volum
esting and almost irreproachable wo
psychological research, and specimens o

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in the name of Mirabeau's creditors"—at the inst
du Saillant, "to seize the letters," many of w
alleged by the impudent editor, "found under
Bastille, some at the Mairie, or were lent, or sold, o
the friends of Sophie and Gabriel, who received the
himself."

This visit led to an action at law. Manuel cal
some worthy auxiliaries of his disgraceful speculatio
de Saint Jean d'Angely, since so renowned, who was t
support of the opposition, was insulted, and even st
Palais de Justice, by Manuel's friends; and it becam
to follow up the suit, the more so as shortly after all the
who had remained at Paris, the Marchioness, M. and M
Saillant, and their six daughters, were thrown into the rev
prisons.

of which would not be sullied by any impurity, nor its beauties condemned on account of the danger of reading them.

Manuel, however, thought of "honouring Mirabeau," and "avenging his memory *," by publishing "the very original letters written from the donjon of Vincennes." In the first instance, he declares that "the whole of these letters were left to him by Gabriel himself," who said to him: "Publish them only after my death, for people are determined not to know me †."

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* See p. 4 of the "Preliminary Discourse."

† P. 43 of the same "Preliminary Discourse." It appears that Manuel had given public notice of his intention; and, prior to the steps taken by Madame du Saillant, to which we have just now alluded, one of Mirabeau's executors did all he could to prevent the collection from appearing. This is proved by the letter addressed on the 21st of May 1791, by M. Frochot, to the Count of Lamarck, afterwards Prince Augustus of Aremberg, which we copy from the original draft.

"I learnt last night, Count, that M. Manuel, ex-administrator of police, is about to publish some of Mirabeau's letters, which he pretends were found after Mirabeau left the Donjon of Vincennes, in a corner of the prisoner's room. These letters or other papers were, it is said, under an envelope with this inscription:—'Papers to be read only after my death.' Whether this packet had been forgotten or whether it was purposely left there we know not, but the police took possession of it, and M. Manuel has probably withdrawn it from the archives and appropriated it to his own purposes. He opened it after Mirabeau's death, and a publisher has been named to me with whom he was in treaty; the name has escaped my memory, but can easily again be obtained should it be necessary. I thought it incumbent upon me to apprise you of Manuel's intention,

We must repel, nay, we must destroy this infamous falsehood, the execrable malignity of which we can happily prove.

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and without prejudging the expediency of putting a stop to it, which is no easy matter, as we are unacquainted with the contents of the letters, I shall merely observe;—1st, If the packet in question was found, as is alleged, in the Donjon of Vincennes, it should have remained at the police office, or been returned either to him who wrote the superscription, or at his decease to his heirs or executors;—2nd, M. Manuel can have no right to appropriate this deposit, and it is a glaring breach of trust to have withdrawn it from the office;—3rd, Supposing even that the packet had remained in the hands of the police after Mirabeau's decease, it is certain that the police could not publish its contents without the consent of the heirs; and M. Manuel is therefore bound to explain how he obtained them. Should you, sir, coincide with me in this opinion, I consider that it will be quite easy for you to force this ex-administrator to account for their being in his possession."

Though M. Frochot's name is most justly held in public estimation, and he was afterwards honourably distinguished in his high office, we still fancy that he is not sufficiently known. The dictates of gratitude induce us to insert a plain and brief notice concerning a man whose memory still awaits the encomiums of a biographer more capable than ourselves of doing justice to his memory *.

Nicholas Therese Benoit Frochot, having duly prosecuted his studies, and having for some time followed the military profession, became in 1789 Notary and Royal Provost at Aignay (Côte-d'Or), when he was elected by the bailiwick of Chatillon-sur-Seine, Deputy of the Tiers-Etat to the States General. At the Assembly

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* There are two imperfect notices, though written with talent and benevolent justice, in the "Biography of Living Men," Paris, 1817, L. G. Michaud, vol. iii. p. 188; and in the "New Biography of Contemporaries," by M. M. Arnault, Jay, Jouy, &c. vol. vii. p. 378.

Mirabeau, having been a year in prison, was deprived for several weeks of the correspondence which was his

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he became intimately connected with Mirabeau, and was most useful to him by the zeal of tender friendship, and by counsels emanating from a mind both contemplative and just in an eminent degree. Prior to 1791 M. Frochot had spoken from the tribune only in favour of the suppression of feudal and conventional privileges. He afterwards treated divers questions relative to the distinction which should be drawn between constituent bodies and national conventions, to the presentation of a constitution to the acceptance of the king, and to the attributes of an assembly of revision. When he became executor of his friend's last will, he discharged with zeal the duties it imposed upon him, and he apprised the Assembly of the insufficiency of the testator's estate. M. Frochot retired from public life, and was imprisoned in 1793. He afterwards held, for some time, the administration of the department of the Côte-d'Or, which had sent him to the legislative body, and in 1800 he was appointed Prefect of the Seine, and subsequently Counsellor of State, a Count of the Empire, and a grand officer of the Legion of Honour. During thirteen years he distinguished himself by his talents and integrity under an administration begun in difficult times, when everything was to be re-constructed, or rather created afresh—order, finances, regulation, subordination, hierarchy, and even pay and promotion. Though he was justly appreciated for his talents as an administrator, his virtue and devotedness, his knowledge and prudence, the latter of which were often done justice to in a state council so strongly composed as that of which he was a member, he was nevertheless sacrificed on the conspiracy of General Malet. M. Frochot was informed in the street of this rapid and unparallelled event, and applied to on the subject without having a moment's reflection. Weighed down by profound grief, he endeavoured to institute inquiries: it did not strike him at the moment that he should have put forth the claims of the King of Rome, and proclaimed—"The Emperor is dead! long live the Emperor!"

On the 24th of December 1812 he was dismissed; and the sensation which this act produced sufficiently proved that Napoleon had more

only solace, as he considered himself now sure of the absolute uselessness of his applications, and the impossibility of being listened to by the king and the ministers. He fancied himself certain that an irrevocable order had been given to deprive him absolutely of books, pens, ink, and paper. He thought that his son was dead; he knew that his daughter was ill, and that Sophie was in despair. He was himself subject to spitting of blood, which he believed incurable. Thus left to the excess of maddening pain, Mirabeau took the resolution he had wrestled with

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a mind to effect a *coup d'état* than to inflict personal disgrace—that the Emperor's aim was to strike those with awe who presumed to call in question the stability of the empire. On the day following Frochot's dismissal, Regnaud de Saint Jean d'Angely brought him a message from the Emperor, full of affection and confidence, and the promise of a speedy recal; and on the 20th of March 1815 Frochot was actually appointed Counsellor of State and Prefect of the Mouths of the Rhone. His fair, impartial, and paternal administration secured the respect of all those who had the imperial rule in horror; and on the 25th of June the author of this work, the obscure pupil and secretary of M. Frochot, saw those same Marseillese who hunted and shot "the imperialists," surround with their homage, and accompany with their blessings, the courageous, loyal, and disinterested Prefect, whom they vainly strove to retain, and who, on the fall of the Emperor, laid down his authority without hesitation. He remained poor, but loaded with public esteem, and having become an agriculturist, lived very retired in his native commune, where his strength of body and serenity of mind promised him yet many years of life; but he died on the 20th of July 1828, at the age of sixty-seven, broke[illegible]urted at the death which had occurred two months previously [illegible] only son, in [illegible] worthy of such a father.

for some time—that of committing suicide. He made all his preparations; procured a certain quantity of acetate of copper (verdigris), by steeping and leaving copper coins in vinegar. He then wrote to Sophie, to the Marchioness, Marquis, and Viscount of Mirabeau, to M. Lenoir, and to M. Boucher, in a style remarkable for tenderness, eloquence, magnanimity, and heroism. These letters have been read in Manuel's collection by every body. Vol. iv. pp. 299—326 *.

At this moment, being about to quit life, he judged himself. Whatever resentment he felt at the injustice he had suffered, was assuaged by the consciousness of his errors, and by the kindness and generosity of his

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* Manuel placed those letters at the end of the collection, because he had not their dates; they were written in the second fortnight of June 1778, as is proved by the following passage:—

"To you, good angel, whose benevolence proves unavailing, I address a deposit of which you may some day be called upon to make some use, and perhaps sooner than you are aware of, if I judge by the state of my mind and body. Be assured that I behold this moment without terror, and that I should view it without regret had I attended to some duties of which my situation does not allow me to acquit myself. I have requested you not to read the accompanying letters before I am gone; I repeat my request, and send them to you open."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated June 20th* 1778.

We find in many letters from Vincennes expressions which lead us to suppose that Mirabeau meditated committing suicide; and these expressions are often repeated. See vol. i. pp. 158, 285, 435, 457; vol. ii. pp. 267, 305, 379; vol. iii. p. 359.

nature. He condemned the vehemence of his justifications, and thus wrote to Sophie:—

"I have burned my memoirs, which contained too strong a defence of my conduct." (Page 304.)

Can it be believed, after these words, written in the presence of death, that Mirabeau should afterwards feel a wish to place before the public a correspondence and justifications a hundred times *stronger*, and sullied by recriminations equally useless and odious?

Two years subsequently, Mirabeau heard from the police, that Brianson, partly to gratify his hatred, and partly to justify Madame de Cabris, intended to publish some letters in his possession, which the unfortunate fugitive had addressed to Sophie at the time they were all making preparation for flight. Mirabeau then wrote to Boucher, who was his good angel:—

"I cannot believe Madame de Cabris foolish enough to be guilty of such perfidy, which would injure her irreparably in the opinion of every body, and which I would avenge if it tended to expose Sophie, were the culprit hid in the centre of the earth *."

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* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated September 6th 1780.

In order not to delay the proof we are anxious to establish, we here insert another passage from the same letter.

Some days after, Mirabeau thus wrote to his sister, Madame du Saillant:—

"I am threatened with even worse evils. Monsters that infest the streets of Paris, whilst so many virtuous people languish at Bicêtre and in the galleys, openly boast that they will publish my correspondence with the unfortunate victim of my love! This is dreadful; and if I survived, it would be to take revenge, were my ruin the consequence *!"

Can it be believed, on reading this sudden burst of a soul in anguish, and while we hear this cry of indignation and honour, that Manuel was autho-

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"I confess the sentence that ends your letter alarms and surprises me; 'I am much afraid,' you say, 'that those steps are unavailing.' Pray tell me, for what occasion are those blows of authority reserved? Will they all tend to crush the innocent, and minister to the will of the tyrants in office? On whom shall they fall if not upon the traitors who could atrociously violate a deposit, and reveal the most distressing secrets of two distinguished families?"

Mirabeau's anxious wishes were soon gratified.

"You restore me to life by setting my mind at ease concerning Brianson. How often has my good angel already saved me! Good and wise friend, you have gained a man who has undoubtedly been guilty of many errors, but was never yet capable of committing a crime; who worships gratitude and honour as his divinities, and to his latest breath belongs entirely to you and yours!"—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated September 27th* 1780.

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madame du Saillant, dated September 10th 1780. A *fac simile* is given of the three sentences just quoted.

rised by Mirabeau to publish the letters written from the donjon of Vincennes?

Besides, were not Mirabeau's feelings and situation changed after a lapse of twelve years? Undoubtedly they were; and this change completes a refutation so evident, that we merely dwell upon it with a view of clearing Mirabeau's memory, even beyond necessity; for it has been cruelly outraged by this most odious and most absurd of calumnies.

It will easily be conceived that Mirabeau, destined to enjoy the highest influence and moral power to which a private individual can attain, would have been greatly afflicted at the idea of publicity being given to the errors and misfortunes of his youth. It was the dread of this publicity that kept him so long from the station to which he was called by his birth, his labours, his genius, at the hitherto unparalleled juncture for which he seemed specially formed, or which seemed to occur on purpose for him. He foresaw that those distressing recollections would incessantly be brought forward by political enemies, excited by the doctrines he had so loudly proclaimed during the last fifteen years, and which he was then putting in practice. For he constantly exasperated those enemies by his haughtiness, both natural and assumed. He felt that the deplorable occurrences of former times would place him in a worse light in proportion as he became elevated in station.

Thus, in society, in the several prefaces to his works*, even at the tribune† he spoke spontaneously of his past life, to meet whatever might be said on the subject. At the commencement of his most important and best digested work, "The Prussian Monarchy," he offered to his father a feeling testimony of veneration and tenderness, in which he most eloquently disclaimed the past.

At the close of 1790, the excellent Madame du Saillant, with her brother's consent, negociated a speedy reconciliation between Mirabeau, so gloriously regenerated, and the wife who had rejected him in a court of justice, when he claimed her immediately after his liberation from prison‡, a reconciliation already called for, ever since the month of March 1789, by popular acclamation and public enthusiasm §.

An end was thus about to be put to the afflicting contrast which Mirabeau's situation had till then presented,

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* "Moses Mendelsohn," preface, p. 19; "Caisse d'Escompte," preface, pp. 13, 15; "Answer to the writer of the 'Water Company' in Paris," p. 100; "Denunciation of Stock-jobbing," p. 19; "Cérutty's Correspondence," p. 19; dedication of "the Prussian Monarchy," pp. 5, 7, &c. &c.

† Session of the 18th of August 1789, concerning the "Declaration of the Rights of Man;" of the 11th of September 1790, on the case of Trouard de Riolles, &c.

‡ Decree of the Parliament of Provence, of the 5th of July 1783.

§ See later, the account of the ovations which Mirabeau received on the 7th of March 1789, at Aix, at Marseilles, and on his road.

between his private character and his great political existence. And would he then think of rekindling so many painful recollections, and allow the publication, henceforward universal and irretrievable, of facts hidden in private correspondence, and in law proceedings known only in distant and confined localities, and, like all such documents, forgotten, and which parties can always disavow as not being their own work! Would he at this period have published in his own name, and as his own spontaneous production, so many disgraceful facts, so many falsehoods, so many exaggerated calumnies, so many horrible accusations? Would he have assumed the authorship of so foul a collection of scandal and infamy? Would he have re-opened and envenomed the wounds inflicted on three noble families? Would he have excluded himself from the recovery of his character? Was it likely that he would thus cut off the road to honour and immortal fame, which he was destined to run?

No one can ever acknowledge in Manuel, the friend, the confidant, the trustee of Mirabeau. We affirm that the latter never knew, and most probably never saw him. No one will ever suppose that Mirabeau gave his consent to a publication calculated to blast his present prospects, and couple his name with infamy; a publication, against which he on the contrary often protested, as if a secret anticipation had shown him in

the future the scandalous act by which an impostor would cast a slur upon his memory.

This is the whole truth respecting the publication of the collection of letters from Vincennes, which so much disgraces, and at the same time sheds so much lustre upon Mirabeau's name. In this work, all he was capable of is found: his strength and his weakness, his talents and his candour, his violence and his kindness, his passion and his patience, his ability and his impetuosity, his horror of despotism and his family pride, his sudden dejection, and that natural confidence which always led him to entertain a good opinion of his own combinations and projects;—in a word, all that placed and kept him beyond the ordinary chances of men—his passions, his genius, and his destiny. He was a singular being; an exception, the only one of his kind. His moving portrait is to be found in this collection, which, it must be admitted, gives a pretty accurate representation of his character. His mind appears a compound of good and evil, of grandeur and littleness; but the good predominates over the evil, and nobleness blots out degradation. His virtues arise out of his very nature and essence; whilst his bad qualities, and what was degrading in him, must principally be attributed to the unjust prejudices, false measures, and odious persecutions by which he was constantly oppressed *.

* "Weigh, and judge whether my honour was sullied by meanness; whether my heart is a sink of corruption; whether my suffer-

This epistolary collection from the donjon of Vincennes will ever remain a blot upon Mirabeau's fame. The great publicity * given to it has perpetuated, with regard to his memory, that fatality, which during his life continually placed his character in a false light, and led his contemporaries to form a wrong judgment of the man who most engrossed their attention. We can scarcely mention any part of the work as undeserving of censure, except that portion of the first volume containing the defence, dated March 1st 1778, (from page 287 to 426 †,) to which we constantly refer, and which is

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ings are proportioned to my errors; whether I deserved to be branded and tortured; whether I am entitled to justice and revenge!"—*Second Case for Counsel's Opinion on behalf of the Count of Mirabeau against the Marquis of Monnier*, p. 40, of the 12mo edit.

* Some biographers pretend that more than fifty thousand copies were sold. Peuchet, however, whose whole life was spent in making compilations and book speculations (we take good care not to style them literature), either did not, or pretended not to know this very notorious fact, when, wishing to publish a copy of this correspondence, he states in his peculiar style:—

"The letters which he (Mirabeau) wrote *to this disconsolate woman* (Sophie), *who ill deserved such great misfortune*, form one of the most interesting *and most unknown* portions of his (Mirabeau's) life."—Vol. i. p. 250.

† Peuchet says, vol. i. p. 274, "It would have been fortunate if the author had been as faithful to truth as he was energetic and eloquent!" We most strongly repel this unjust accusation. We do not deny that this paper contains ingenious sophistry and an unsatisfactory justification; but there is not a single fact at variance with truth; nor is a single truth omitted, however embarrassing to the author.

admirable. It is clear, methodical, logical, moderate, and elegant. Would to Heaven that the public had only become acquainted with Mirabeau's private life through this document! No shade would then obscure his great reputation; no humiliating recollections would then attach to his name. The prejudices which exaggerate Mirabeau's errors, and accuse him of vices he never displayed, would not then be indiscriminately taken advantage of by the hatred of political adversaries, by the credulity of the indolent, by the avidity of compilers, by the silly jealousy of exasperated detractors of great men and things, or by the systematic spirit of some dreamers, whose fancy is so strongly directed to errors and vices, that they occasionally invent them, and are, therefore, the readier to insert in their fantastic compositions those offered to them by other inventors.

Finally, the truth which we are anxious to establish would have shone in brilliant and pure lustre upon Mirabeau's tomb, if the purloiner of his posthumous letters had only published the defence we recommend to perusal, and of which the author himself said :—

"It contains only facts more weakened to my disadvantage than exaggerated in my favour*."

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 262. We shall hereafter have occasion to refer to a letter in which Mirabeau thus expresses himself:—

"I mention everything in that statement, to which I challenge all

Whatever be the nature of the correspondence from Vincennes, we are, thank God, not limited like our predecessors to that source, which is but too often impure, for the materials which form our work. Other documents as we have already stated, quite as authentic, if not more so, inasmuch as they have not been falsified, have already enabled us to eradicate errors which had gained credence, and to substantiate truths which were still doubtful. We have in our possession many letters from both the prisoners, withdrawn from the vigilance of the police and which had been intrusted to secret emissaries. Of these we shall make the use which Manuel ought to have made of the others, retaining only what may gratify innocent curiosity, tend to give useful explanations, and move people's sympathy without affecting their morals. We have likewise the original drafts of more than

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possible contradiction, fully persuaded as I am that it will not receive any."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated May 16th 1779.*

These observations were written when we were made acquainted with the judgment which Laharpe passed upon the "Correspondence from Vincennes," in an article contained in pp. 277—289 of the unpublished Miscellanies of Literature, collected by J. B. Salgues, Paris, Chaumerot, 1810. This article contains such a judgment, and so remarkable from the authority of a judge generally unfavourable to Mirabeau, that we should have substituted it for our own reflections had we not taken the firm resolution of never borrowing from printed documents, except in cases of strict necessity and evident utility.

three hundred letters addressed by Mirabeau to Boucher, and Dupont de Nemours; also many of the answers to them. Finally we possess a voluminous family correspondence which forms the counterpoise of that published by Manuel, more particularly as regards the period of Mirabeau's detention in the donjon of Vincennes. We shall avail ourselves of this unpublished correspondence which is not less interesting than the other; and in which, allowing for the lawful artifices of defence and justification, we find Mirabeau better portrayed by himself, and more preremptorily justified, as he continually triumphs over his adversaries, whose replies, which we likewise insert word for word, or in extracts, will enable the public to hear both sides of the question.

We have made copious extracts, which we might easily have increased tenfold. Fearful however of drawing too largely from these materials, we hesitated for some time before we used any portion of them.

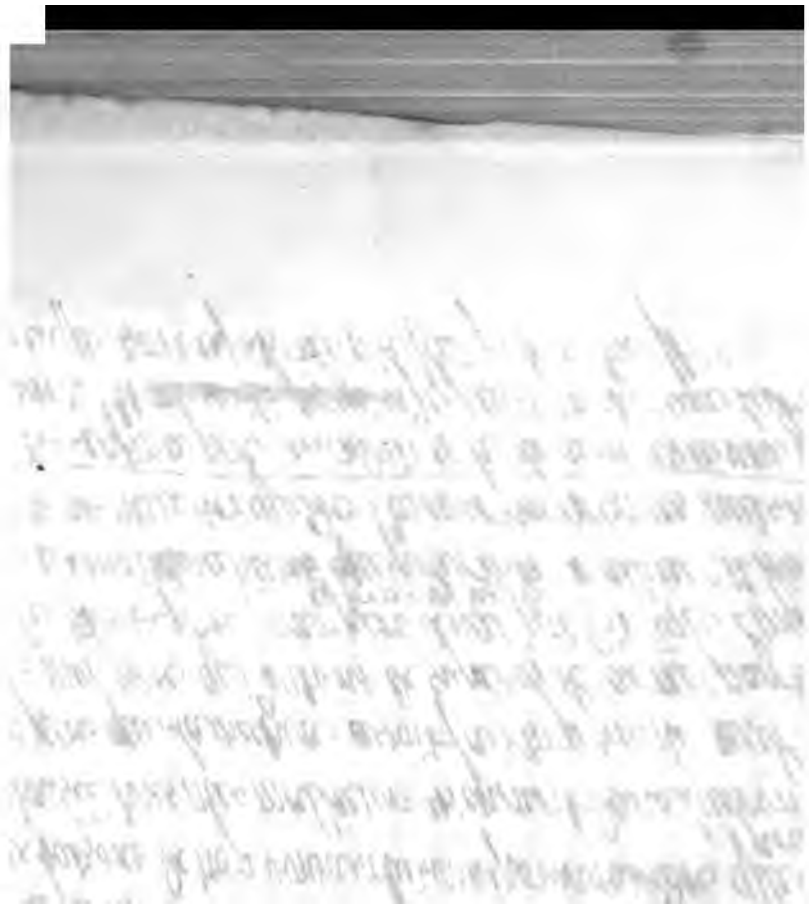
We asked ourselves whether it would not be disadvantageous to the work, for we are absolutely free from the pride of authorship, and to Mirabeau's memory, to refer by extracts to personal facts which have already been too much before the public; whether it would not be more advisable to let the recollection of so much domestic misery gradually merge in immense and never-fading celebrity, as the spots on the sun's disc are lost in its dazzling light; whether we

might not expose ourselves like others to the reproach of being too prolix; finally whether by bringing this correspondence before the public, discredit might not, in some measure, be cast upon it, from the restraint under which Mirabeau laboured when claiming his freedom, and the manner necessarily assumed by him in vindicating himself, and by ourselves in vindicating him. But on attentively considering these objections, we were induced to forego them.

Some eminent men, of even modern times, have had the good fortune to appear before posterity in a favourable light, only through the medium of their public actions and works. Mirabeau has not enjoyed this valuable advantage. His lawsuits, and more especially an odious speculation, have indiscriminately exposed and simultaneously brought to the broad face of day both his private and his public life, which are intimately blended in the same publication. It is now altogether impossible to separate them: vain would it be to publish a hundred editions of his works without a particle of personality; general recollection would constantly arise against this unavailing silence, and present under the same aspect, the dissolute young man and the laborious adult, the rebellious son and the eloquent legislator, the thoughtless profligate and the founder of a new political order. Publishers would thence be obliged, as formerly, to procure biographical notices for such editions. If,

qui est un fond de premières bonheurs, parce qu'il est le plus continuel. Hélas ! mon
ami, j'avais mes raisons, de trop bonnes raisons pour craindre que votre sort ne fut en
effet d'être jaloux ! tous mes malheurs s'enchaînent dans leur origine première d'abord à
mon père ; mon père que la nature avoit fait trop grand pour qu'il pût lui être permis
d'être jaloux ; mon père qui autant de supériorité sur moi par le génie, qu'il en a
par l'âge et le titre de père ; mon père à qui j'ai dû tracer l'ingénuité et l'imprudence
de la jeunesse ces mots touchants que pour mon malheur, il trop bien entendit
hélas ! quand vous saurez que de l'amour propre, mes seules armes étoient-ils pas en-
tre les vôtres ? ... enfin ce père se conduit en ce moment avec une générosité tardive et
sèche, mais rare : il [illegible] je pus arracher une larme de lui, me voilà
payé de tout ce que son despotisme m'a fait jamais essuyer.

+ il y a plus de 10 ans



anxious to represent under favourable colours a great man, whose enemies time has reduced to silence, and whose works now elicit almost universal admiration, they had recourse to enlightened and well disposed writers only, such as Chaussard, Cadet Gassicourt, Barthe, Mérilhou and some others,—still for want of better, they must of necessity employ existing materials; that is to say imperfect notices, or odious pamphlets not sufficiently contradicted; and, the most fallacious of all, existing publications, such as Manuel's collection, in which nearly each letter more or less violates truth as much as it does reason and public decency,

These considerations called for the additional research and statements supported by evidence, which have long occupied us, and became imperative upon us from the conviction of our understanding, the feelings of our heart, and the last wishes expressed by Mirabeau himself. These motives removed all our doubts, and made us resolve to take from the correspondence all that bears reference to the long and difficult negociation which preceded Mirabeau's release, and is but imperfectly stated even in Manuel's collection, terminating October 12th 1780 *, namely two months prior to that event. These materials moreover enable us to show

* We may even say that the sequel of the correspondence is much sooner closed in Manuel's collection, as he published only fifteen letters for the first nine months of the year 1780, whilst he

Mirabeau, portrayed by himself as before, brought back to the path of reason, to the feelings of nature, and altogether cured of the delirious fever, the disgraceful and distressing effects of which Manuel has so impudently exposed.

Nevertheless, ought we to run the further risk of deceiving ourselves with regard to the interest and merit of our materials, and expose ourselves to the reproach of tedious loquacity and mean calculation, so justly imputed to the biographer Peuchet? We have seriously considered this point also. Discarding on the one hand all comparison with that writer, because he has merely embodied in his too voluminous work, documents often before published, without adding a single fact unknown until his work appeared, whilst we, with the exception of a few pages, employ only unpublished documents; considering on the other hand that the general sympathy attached to Mirabeau's memory would give some interest to facts that related to him, the more so as they are supplied by himself—and his errors, as well as his misfortunes, having already been brought before the public by the publication of recriminatory complaints which have been justly condemned

gives us twenty-six for the last six months of 1777, fifty-three for 1778, and thirty-six for 1779. Though we do not possess all that was written by the two lovers, we have a hundred and fourteen of their letters dated in 1780.

for their acrimony, we consider ourselves justified in entering fully into the affecting particulars which clear his character, and confer honour upon his memory.

Finally, may we credit Mirabeau's repentance as we did his errors? Will his excuses not obtain the same belief as his libels? We trust they will, because we fancy we have proved that virtuous and delicate feelings were more natural to him than depraved taste and hateful passions. We likewise show that his pen by purifying itself has lost none of its power and eloquence.

When Mirabeau was confined, on the 7th of June 1777, in the Donjon of Vincennes, he first of all commenced a correspondence with Sophie; and afterwards, but with much less ardour, he tried to obtain his release.

This correspondence could not fail in the first instance to meet with many obstacles. We have stated those of which Sophie complained. Her letters express great anguish.

"I write continually, and you cannot read my letters. You also write and nothing can reach me. I weep almost incessantly, and I contain myself merely that I may not injure your son *. O! God! that I

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 15th 1777. She was then two months pregnant.

should never hear from you! This is really dreadful, and will deprive us both of life! May I die a thousand deaths if ever I consent to it; at that price we would refuse all the treasures and thrones of the earth *. What! no letters! not one word! not a soul who has seen and spoken to you! Oh! how dreadful are the pangs I endure! I am certain that I am quite as miserable as you are; I swear that I do not wish to be less so †. We are then come to that month of July, when we could no longer be together ‡! The first year we saw each other without daring, or rather without thinking of loving one another §; the second we did love—ah! you know it well! But notwithstanding my repeated endeavours, we could not come nearer to each other. This year, O God! we are torn asunder in the midst of our happiness, carried away by our enemies, and both imprisoned! Were we only together, dungeons would have charms, and we would kiss the fetters that bound us to the same stake ||! What wretchedness is in store for us! —with what pleasure would we have died when we

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* Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 16th 1777.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 23rd 1777.

‡ 1775.

§ "Without thinking of loving one another." This confirms what we have stated elsewhere, and contradicts Peuchet's conjectures, vol. i. p. 154.

|| Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, July 1st 1777.

parted! Alas! we both suffer so much as to be surprised that we are still alive *! I can live no longer if I do not hear from you. What a service would he render us who should cut off from our lives the time we are to pass out of each other's presence! I am often obliged to recal to mind your prohibition, your promises, and your son, that I may be able to endure my distress. I do endure and resist it. I am not even ill; I could wish I were so if I did not happen to be pregnant. I may yet become so, for all things must have an end. I tell you, and I say it also to our executioners, I shall not always be pregnant †!"

Mirabeau on the other hand felt the same torments. Having clandestinely and precipitately exhausted some scraps of paper he had been able to obtain, he had no longer the means of writing, for he found it impossible

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* Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated July 23rd 1777.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated July 24th 1777.

We see in this letter another proof of that fatal disposition to suicide displayed by Sophie.

"I am here much occupied with gay thoughts. I have just recollected a poison which produces the same effect as opium, and even the taste of which is not unpleasant. It is a decoction of laurel berries. I have heard of the fatal effect of a small dose. People seem resolved to reduce us to these measures. Alas! were it only in each other's arms we were doomed to die!—were I to die on Gabriel's bosom I should still know happiness!"

See also in the collection of Letters from Vincennes, what Mirabeau wrote to her on this subject, vol. ii. p. 267.

to obtain a fresh supply*. This kind of privation was insupportable to him; it almost drove him mad, and would no doubt have killed him if he had not succeeded in raising an interest in those who had charge of his person.

In this he did succeed; he states it himself.

"The energy of our passion has affected these people. Fearful of reducing us to despair, they have granted us a favour perhaps without precedent. Though at bottom it is but just and reasonable, still it appears strange when seen through the mists of prejudice †."

The favour which saved Mirabeau's life, as he never ceased repeating in his letters, was the permission, for which he was indebted to M. Lenoir, to write to Sophie, and receive letters from her. This correspondence occupied almost the whole of his time, the least delay tortured him, and he incessantly teased both the public authorities (Manuel's collection affords us a thousand proofs of it which we do not adduce because they are published) and the friend whom misfortune had gained him.

"O good angel! have you then condemned me? Are you capable of counting the crumbs which avaricious pity throws to a hungry wretch? Are you aware that twenty-five days have elapsed since I have had any

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 33, 34, 60, 116.

† Idem, vol. ii. p. 28; vol. iii. pp. 93, 111, 581.

celestial manna? Are you aware that I weep, or rather do you wish that my tears may blind me before my time? Do you know that the last sparks of my happiness are becoming fainter, and will be entirely extinguished if you do not again revive them with your benevolent breath? Consider that nothing in the world can indemnify me for a delay, not even your own presence, for you will bring me only one. This letter and yourself would not fail to reach me, were the privation which makes me disconsolate to end this very day *! My good angel, whenever you make a mistake, let it be, I entreat you, at your own expense, and not at mine; and as your mistake has caused me four days' delay, and a thousand uneasy moments, you owe me one, two, even three letters more for it. I really let you off easily; but attend to what I say, else I shall withdraw my absolution, and it would be rather a strange sight to behold an excommunicated angel †!"

Though the prisoner's captivity was much mitigated, he never ceased to solicit his release, and that of his friend, as either a favour, or an act of justice; for they had not obtained a regular trial, though they demanded one. Besides his frequent letters to M. Lenoir,

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated January 30th 1778.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated February 13th 1779.

whose limited power could be of service to him only in matters of minor importance, he tried to obtain a hearing elsewhere. He had already, on the 17th of November 1777, written to the Duke of Noailles, who was related to his mother. This letter is to be found in the correspondence from Vincennes *.

On the 1st of May 1778, he forwarded a memorial to the minister Amelot †. On the 8th of May, he sent a petition to the king ‡, in which, as he says, "the monarch must find more truths than he will hear in the whole course of his reign. I am not only unable to assume a mean, cringing tone, but I cannot refrain from speaking with more severity to the rulers of the earth, than I would to other people. The voices of nature and freedom resound so strongly in my ears, the hatred of despotism so fully occupies my heart, that my thoughts and style are affected by them, whatever I may attempt to the contrary. As I have stated to M. Lenoir §, I dare not hope that my petition will reach the monarch. Truth is too coarse to be allowed to approach the throne in her natural guise: she must be clad in a court-dress, which means, that we must provide her with a mask, to say no worse ||."

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* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 217.

† Ibid., vol. ii. p. 126. ‡ Ibid., vol. ii. p. 129.

§ Ibid., vol. i. p. 125.

|| Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Sophie, April 29th 1778

On the same day, and on the 20th of February, the prisoner wrote two letters to the minister Maurepas *, an old man, at once frivolous and harsh †, whom the Marquis of Mirabeau almost entirely governed. These letters were very affecting, but much too violent ‡ not to

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* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. ii. p. 143; vol. iii. p. 88.

† We find in two letters from the Bailli of Mirabeau some observations which appear just and pointed, respecting M. de Maurepas and the unfortunate monarch who made choice of him without knowing him, thinking that he must be wise because he was old, and blindly abandoned himself to an individual unfit for his office, for the times in which he lived, and for a monarch as weak as he was virtuous, and whose only mentor this minister was for the space of seven years.

"With respect to Maurepas, he is prone to ill humour; besides, he values morals, decency, and honour only so far as they are found convenient and amusing."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 26th* 1781.

"What can you expect from that old parrot of the regency, in the presence of his frightened master, who is the man of Esop, the man of nature, the peasant of the Danube, and surrounded as men of his description generally are?"—*Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated April 24th* 1781.

‡ As we read them in the "Collection of Letters from Vincennes," we ask ourselves what a prisoner might expect from a minister by addressing such language to him. Mirabeau says elsewhere:—

"I have written to the prime minister, and I apprise all my fellow citizens that the most courageous and the purest virtue may become indignant, and ruffled even to ferocity. It is especially the denial of justice which reduces strong minds to excessive despair.

prove dangerous to the writer. He also at that period employed himself in extracting from his father's principal work, "The Friend of Men," a certain number of maxims on the law of nature and that of nations, on "lettres de cachet," on illegal detentions, on the denial of justice, on the withdrawal of cases from their proper judges, and on the abuse of despotism *. Mirabeau accompanied those extracts with strong commentaries, in which he contrasted the theory of the philanthropic author with the practice of the unjust father and persecutor †.

He again wrote two letters to M. de Maurepas, the one dated October 18th 1778, which remained unpub-

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Despotism, which renders the mind degenerate, preys upon, and annihilates everything, and will transform the most useful passions, the most distinguished talents, and the most praiseworthy feelings into an inexhaustible source of pain, misfortune, and crime. But the latter should be imputed to the sordid and narrow-minded beings who consider all warmth of feeling a dangerous folly, all lofty ideas a reprehensible singularity, and want to reduce men to the measure of their tyranny; not unlike that cruel Procrustes, who had his victims placed on a bed of iron, causing them, if found too short, to be stretched to its length, and to be mutilated if found to exceed this length."—*Lettres de Cachet*, vol. i. p. 262.

Mirabeau might easily have written in this style to M. de Maurepas, but this passage is not found in any of the Letters of the Collection from Vincennes.

* Mirabeau, without naming his father, contrasted him with himself in the "Lettres de Cachet," particularly in vol. i. pp. 257—336.

† Original Letters written from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. ii. pp. 160—229; vol. iii. p. 86.

lished, and to which we shall refer presently; the other dated February 20th 1779, inserted in Manuel's collection *, and not less bitter than the first of the three. There is absolutely nothing, however, either in public documents, or in our private papers, calculated to make us believe that so many energetic representations and substantiated facts, produced the least effect, or that they were even read, or led to the slightest investigation. We may even presume that they were totally disregarded, from the very circumstance of their having been afterwards published by Manuel, who could only have obtained them at the police office, where the prisoner's petitions would surely not have been found, had they, when they were written, been forwarded to the persons for whom they were intended.

Mirabeau felt persuaded that he should not be set at liberty without certain conditions; but the hope of obtaining his freedom at any price, made him abandon the idea of suicide. He at one moment thought he should be permitted to go into exile. His military inclinations, and especially his eager desire for freedom, had already, as it did in 1776, suggested the idea of entering a foreign service, and many of his letters apprised Sophie of this, and greatly alarmed her. At the period our narrative has now reached, people's minds

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 86.

in France were much occupied with the war waged by the North American provinces, which till then belonged to England, against the mother country, whose yoke they wanted to shake off. Their cause was enthusiastically espoused by many Frenchmen. These crossed the Atlantic without the consent, and even contrary to the commands of the king, whose policy only declared itself at a later period. Mirabeau wished to join this gallant expedition. On the 18th of November 1776, he wrote to M. de Maurepas in the following terms—

"I have not at present the honour of offering you a justification. As none of my former letters have produced any change in my condition, as I am even refused the distressing advantage of being heard in my own defence and confronted with my accusers, I have but one request to make, which I believe will not displease my father, and will relieve your natural kindness, against which you have undoubtedly been compelled to struggle, since you have treated me with so much harshness.

"The political events which have transpired since my confinement will surely require the sending of troops to America *, perhaps to the Indies. I entreat you to

* The war of American independence commenced in April 1775. The enlightened and penetrating mind of the Bailli had long foreseen that event, and those which followed it.

"Our least sharp-sighted people declare that in less than forty

let me go to one of those countries. There is always a want of men in such destructive climates, and I shall surely make a good soldier. Here I have ceased to live, without even enjoying the repose of death. I merely vegetate, and am of no earthly use. Permit me to place the ocean between my father and me. I promise you, Sir, nay, I swear that it shall only bring back either a certificate of my death, or the renown of actions which will loudly give the lie to my mean and perfidious detractors, and make them feel compunction for the years of which I have been deprived. If I were banished to a corner of the earth, I should, as regards France, be no less a prisoner than I am here; and the king would have another subject who would devote his life to him."

This letter was not more successful than the others; and Mirabeau often renewed his proposal, but to no purpose. This may be seen in the collection of letters from Vincennes *.

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years the new world will have shaken off the yoke of the old, and will treat with her on terms of equality. The English colonies will set the example, and New England shows scarcely greater relative subordination than Carthage did to Tyre. I, who have a closer view of the prevailing stagnation, am of opinion that the time is much nearer at hand."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 26th* 1754, from Guadaloupe.

* Vol. i. p. 424; vol. iii. p. 369. He likewise expressed his wish and intention in the "Lettres de Cachet," vol. i. p. 284.

The situation, however, which had suggested this application, became intolerable. The prisoner's imagination began to work, and even made him involuntarily commit an injustice towards Sophie herself.

"I have a million of motives for not imputing to the very excellent M. B. (Boucher) a lengthened delay which seemed to cause him as much pain as it did me. Let me ask you whom I am to blame for making me pass ten days and eleven nights in the agonies of pain and uncertainty? I do not know whether I should not blame yourself: but if you already make so light of the wretch who from dawn of day to the morrow is occupied with you alone, dreams of you, thinks of you, speaks to you, writes to you and for you;—if there be any other cause than impossibility that makes you show such little concern for my anguish, my fears, my illusions, the delirium of that imagination which you alone inflame, of that heart over which you hold such despotic sway, of those senses which outlive themselves to burn again at your remembrance with all the fires of love, then Gabriel is still unhappier than he thought he was *."

He soon, however, blamed himself for this injustice; but the painful sense of his situation made him

"I, who shall not end my days in a land sullied by despotism if I can but break my fetters; .... I, who, if I were not kept in chains, would go to learn from them, and to fight for them."

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 91.

give vent to other complaints as violent, though less unjust.

"Rigorous fate! cruel perplexity! How much longer will you oppress a being that is sinking under his sufferings? I am tormented with pangs I never felt before. I would willingly say, with Orestes

My innocence has at length become a burthen to me!

I have no peace with my implacable enemies; I shall find it only in my grave. Pity never enters their rancorous hearts. As cruel as they are unjust, their commiseration will not grant what their iniquity refuses. This is indeed too much! I know not whether, being proscribed by a superior destiny, by that fatal necessity which suffers crime to triumph, and leaves innocence to lamentation, I am doomed to die of despair, or to provoke my fate by some crime; but the penalty precedes it by much too long a time. I feel a frenzy of indignation, and hatred, which never before entered my heart*!"

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* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p 92. It is undoubtedly under the influence of such a state of mind, and with feelings first of bitter indignation and afterwards of maddening despair, that Mirabeau wrote the two following pages, the one strong, the other terrible:—

"Despotism knows no law but violence; it would allow a rebel to be tried with impartiality much less than any other description of criminal. Its only law is force. All justice is at an end: there is no longer a citizen. A man is a mere slave; and from a slave nothing

Mirabeau, at the same time, addressed his complaints to M. Lenoir.

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is due, because he has nothing of his own. A man of spirit will soon leave a country where despotism holds sway. If he is unable to do so he will soon be degraded. Whilst the mother country gives nothing, we owe her nothing, because the duties of each are reciprocal. The government vested in a single man, disposes of every other man according to his pleasure, his caprice, or his interest. From that moment every individual has a tacit right to gain as much from the sovereign as he can. If justice is rightly understood, treason cannot exist in a despotic state, because the slave can be neither a debtor nor a creditor. We cannot infringe laws and regulations in a government whose very essence is to be altogether without them. And this want of law is the vice that will destroy everything; for nothing is preserved and re-produced except by fixed and immutable laws."— *Treatise on Despotism*, page 65.

"I shall not endeavour to prove here, that it is the supreme degree of atrocity, when an attempt has been made upon a man's liberty, when he has been reduced to the despair of slavery, to punish him for what he may have done to become free, even be it excessively cruel; as if a miserable slave was not out of the pale of society, and beyond the laws which govern it, when they are powerless to protect him; as if a single law existed for him; as if nature and justice required that he should respect the life of one who disregards all that ought to belong to him; as if the satellites, the tools of oppression, were not as culpable in his sight as the oppressor himself; as if everything, I say EVERYTHING, without exception, was not lawful for a man to use in order to break his fetters! Know, all of you, whoever you may be, that you have two sets of weights and measures: you place all the duties in one scale, all the rights in the other; you sell the morals, the justice, and the freedom of the human species; you pretend not to know that a man is often culpable, ay, most culpable in obeying you. The greatest crime a man can commit towards himself and his fellow-creatures, is to execute the mandates of a government which,

" The regulations of this place are so excessively—I was near saying, so cruelly severe, that I am sure to die if I remain here any longer. I have no society whatever. The very turnkey who attends to us is enjoined not to remain longer in our dungeons than is required to satisfy our wants, and not to speak of anything else. We are allowed one hour out of the twenty-four for walking; the rest of the time we are alone with grief, and deprived of all literary resources. We have but few books, and these are bad. We experience endless delays in the gratification of our most innocent wishes and our most simple wants; delays enforced by the forms required to obtain the slightest favour. No musical instrument of any kind is allowed to be in our possession. In a word, every recreation, every solace is taken from us with the most studied cruelty. This is but a feeble sketch of our situation. All these precautions, which it may be necessary to observe with certain prisoners, are most unnecessarily cruel towards him who is only persecuted by his family. You must admit that a man who possesses a mind and some spirit, cannot withstand this kind of life, in which his talents, his knowledge, his feelings even the most praiseworthy,

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by depriving him of the free exercise of his will, his opinions, and his conscience, may at any time place crime among the number of his duties. Know, that a despot, a gaoler, and a slave-dealer, are three beings devoted by nature and justice to the dagger of him whom they enslave, if the latter have the least chance of breaking his fetters at such a price."—*Lettres de Cachet*, vol. i. p. 269.

instead of yielding him the smallest relief, are made to concur in his destruction *."

The severity of the prisoner's confinement was however somewhat mitigated by M. Lenoir's humanity, and Boucher's active sympathy. Mirabeau felt the more obliged for this, because Boucher had already suffered for his kindness, charges having been brought against him on account of this kindness, which might have proved his ruin.

" You have been able to understand us, good angel; you have put more faith in me than in my enemies, and what is even more, than in a false friend, a man for whom I would have laid down my life, and for whom my life has been exposed †—a man whose ingratitude and treachery are an instance of the lowest state of degradation to which our species can be brought. Man is a singular compound, at once so strong and so weak, so sublime and so base ‡. My mind is now at

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* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. ii. p. 386.

† Brianson, whom we have already mentioned.

‡ Five years subsequently, whilst Mirabeau was writing on the 13th of October 1784, to Chamfort, the same thoughts occurred to him.

" Alas! my friend! you and Tacitus will then always be right? Man is a strange mixture of levity and perversity, whom we are bound to serve, and would willingly love; who counts the stars, subdues the elements, defies and combats all the powers of nature, and can do anything but conduct himself and his equals. He has found everything save liberty and peace; he has been able to confer and endure authority, but can neither direct nor second it. He can cringe, but is unable to obey; he can revolt, but is unable to

ease. Your conduct is guided by the workings of a heart so full of that noble confidence which a man derives from self-contentment and habitual virtue, that it has even made me shed tears. Yes! you may trust to my honour! you may rely on my integrity. None but a virtuous man ventures to rely upon the virtuous; and my conscience, that secret comforter, whose voice is louder than that of the crowd, and even of fame, and which, regardless of praise or reproach, overcomes every thing, tells me that I deserve the good opinion you entertain of me*!"

"Read my letter to M. Lenoir and the one to Sophie †, and judge whether my requests, my wishes, and my feelings are not just. Am I buying books whilst Sophie earns her daughter's subsistence at the

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defend himself; he can love, but cannot become attached. In short, he is imbued with all the contradictions of good and evil.

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Good God! in what actions have I detected those who were most eloquent on the subject of friendship!"—*Letter to Chamfort*, p. 59.

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated March 11th 1779. Mirabeau transposes part of this letter to that inserted in vol. iii. p. 54 of the Correspondence from Vincennes. The second part of the sentence, "that secret comforter," &c., which is borrowed from Seneca (de Benef. b. iv. p. 21.) is likewise placed at the end of p. 87 of the "Lettres de Cachet." We find in the same work, p. 33, this fine definition of conscience, of which the latter part is borrowed from Cicero (Tuscul. II. 30.):—"Justice is the natural voice of the soul, and there is no grander theatre for virtue than conscience."

† Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 93.

sacrifice of her rest! The very thought drives me mad! Alas! have they not made this amiable woman already suffer quite enough on my account? —and must I still be goaded by remorse? In the name of all that is dear to you, if I am allowed, and I can hardly bring my mind to believe any thing to the contrary, to give up half of my six hundred francs to assist in my daughter's maintenance, I beg you will keep back and remit that sum as my quarters become due. I entreat of you this new favour. Allow me to assist at least the unhappy Sophie, and to discharge this sacred debt*!"

Though M. Boucher's forbearance daily increased, Sophie attempted to conceal from his inspection some particulars which she wrote with lemon-juice or sympathetic ink on separate sheets. Whether it was the unusual blanks and the whiteness of those sheets that excited suspicion, or mere chance, we know not, but the deception was detected, and M. Boucher wrote:—

"The cover has been blackened near the fire. The good angel thought he had only occasion to use his eyes. But should he be forced to abstain from reading

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated March 14th 1779. See also the Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 56. and the following. Subsequently Mirabeau had again occasion to renew his entreaties concerning this matter. See the Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 93.

what is most interesting, the good angel would be obliged to become a devil, especially as the questions and answers are at variance with the peace of the interested parties*."

Mirabeau, being rather at a loss, endeavoured to answer him the same day in a note, to which he vainly attempted to give an amusing turn. On the day following he wrote, in a more serious style—

"I will not say to you, like Vendôme:—

Vous avez mis la mort dans mon cœur outragé,

but I will tell you that you have truly given me pain, and that you have it quite in your power to leave me a prey to profound melancholy. You need only make me believe that you still think of this piece of folly. I beg however to assure you that I am much more grieved at your having suspected me of being capable of betraying your confidence, than at having lost the favour of a man from whom I derive the only comfort of my life. Your friendship and esteem are much more valuable to me than your services. This has not always been the case, but it is most assuredly so at present. I repeat to you, that you shall have no further occasion to complain. If you had, I should be inexcusable. Give me back your confidence, therefore, and tell me that you are

* Unpublished letter from M. Boucher to Mirabeau, dated March 31st 1779. We find in the Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 134, some allusion to this just and kind reprimand.

attached to me, should it even deprive me, for three months, of my Sophie's correspondence. The punishment would certainly exceed the offence *!"

The accuracy, which we make it our duty to observe, would perhaps require that we should here notice a project of reconciliation between Sophie and her husband; for it has been too often mentioned in the publications which have preceded ours, especially in the correspondence from Vincennes, to admit of our passing it over in silence. But this circumstance, which is purely incidental, can only be explained in detail, and would interrupt our narrative for too long a time. Therefore, though these particulars are mostly unpublished, we transfer them to the Appendix of the present volume. Whatever Mirabeau may have said in the good faith of his passion †, Sophie's letters mostly offer but a slender interest when they do not convey the expression of very energetic feelings. For this reason we have been sparing in our extracts; but as we wish to honour this noble victim of love, we transcribe one affecting passage.

"Love surely adds immensely to parental tenderness! We dote so much upon whatever proceeds from the object of our affection! How would it be possible for us not to cherish his children, who form a part of himself? Of

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated April 1st 1779.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. ii. p. 81.

all the crimes which excite the greatest horror, none is more dreadful than that of the wretched females who destroy or expose their offspring, and are able to survive such a deed. The Confessor, who allowed his fair penitent to expose hers, if she kissed it thrice, had probably been a father, and knew how strongly we are attached to our children. No animals exist which abandon their young; yet most of them know not the father of their offspring. They love them, therefore, for their own sake. If any one steal to enrich himself, it is an easy road to wealth; there is but one step more to assassination: but to kill a poor infant, which we owe to the tenderness of the man we love, and this to save a pretended reputation, is a thing I shall never be able to conceive *!"

Mirabeau's burning temperament made him sometimes forget to observe the necessary caution in a correspondence liable to come under official inspection. Boucher reprimands him for it with kindness.

" I confess that if I were so much in love as you are, and as I have been, I might perhaps do the same thing; but it is necessary we should inform you that the three first pages of your letter exceed the limits of our forbearance, and that if it were unfor-

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated April 15th 1779.

tunately intercepted, we should be accused of aiding and abetting seduction * !"

Mirabeau replied:

" Alas! what you say is but too well founded. How just is your slow prudence; it is far preferable to my turbulent precipitation, and violent thoughtlessness! How persevering and enlightened is your zeal, and how affecting your indulgence †!"

After waiting four months, Mirabeau obtained permission to see Dupont, in private.

" Yes, good angel, amiable keeper! my mind is calm and my heart content, and always moved by your inexhaustible kindness. What good have you not done me during the last ten days!"

" But I know not why I thank you for the new and very important favour of seeing Dupont in private. M. de Rougemont ‡ told me this morning, before I had opened my parcel, that it was he (Rougemont) who had solicited and obtained this permission from M. Lenoir. Do you not therefore see that I must thank M. de Rougemont alone? Oh! how ungrateful I am!

" He told me that he had heard from M. Boucher, (do you by chance know him) that he had been writing

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* Unpublished letter from M. Boucher to Mirabeau, dated May 4th 1779.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated May 7th 1779.

‡ Commandant of the Castle of Vincennes.

to me, in answer to my question, whether my letter to my father* had been given to Dupont. This concerns me; for you will easily conceive that it is quite impossible I should give Dupont instructions concerning my affairs with the same precision whilst I am speaking to him in prison, as I could do by making him read that paper, in which I state every thing, and anticipate every kind of objection, quite confident as I am that none can be offered †.

"With regard to what I stated to you that Dupont was in the secret of my correspondence with Sophie, what I am about to tell is all I know, as he did not explain himself clearly, because Vallage ‡ happened to be present. I spoke to him of the obligations I was under to M. Lenoir and yourself. I told him that, to say all in one word, you had saved my life.

"'I know it,' was his reply.

"'And do you know on what occasion?'

"'Yes! and it has afforded me much satisfaction §'"

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* Justification addressed by Mirabeau to his father, "Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes," vol. i. p. 287.

† We have already mentioned, and again call the reader's attention to the declaration which Mirabeau makes respecting this most true, or perhaps the only true, document hitherto published concerning his youth.

‡ The King's Lieutenant (lieutenant-de-roi) of the Castle of Vincennes.

§ Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated May 16th 1779.

Of all Sophie's causes of grief, the one she felt the most was her separation from her child.

"What the good angel has told me concerning my daughter's teeth, grieves me much, for it is a dangerous time for children! I can no longer bear those of other people. To see them have their child, whilst I am deprived of mine, irritates me so much that it makes me quite unreasonable, and agonises my mind. When I am thus affected, as at this moment, every thing but you becomes most disagreeable. I am out of temper with every thing. I would destroy every thing, and offer up as a holocaust to yourself all that belongs not to you or me. But far different from Jephtha, I would except my daughter *!"

In reference to this same letter, Mirabeau wrote some time after:—

"Believe me, the poor creature suffers in proportion to her courage; but her anger quiets me. The noble and gloomy accents of restrained grief would alarm me much more than her exclamations and her rage.

* * * * * * * * *

"Malicious, twofold malicious spirit, who refusest me tidings of my child and its mother. I write to scold, to conjure, to exorcise thee:—or rather incarnate devil, under the form of an angel, remember that I am weary

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated May 10th 1779.

of a fortnight's celibacy. You take Sophie's letters to yourself, or you have some of them written to you at my expense. Restore me then my property, or I shall hate you. May heaven perpetuate your want of feeling, O most phlegmatic Picard! and may love preserve me from it. Adieu, I hate you as much as I am able. It is really a most difficult task, but I try to do it *."

Mirabeau could not refrain from alluding to the treatment he experienced in the Donjon of Vincennes:—

" I possess many proofs of your indulgence. I daily receive marks of your kindness. Read the enclosed; weigh each word; and make also this effort for an unfortunate being worthy of a better fate. Do lose even half a day and afford me an hour's private conversation in my room. I assure you that both your own justice and that of the worthy magistrate I invoke, are at stake. Come and receive the effusions of an honest heart, which is half broken, but full of tender feelings towards you †."

Mirabeau was subjected to every sort of privation. He was even distressed for clothes; though much more alive to the wants of the mind than to those of the body. He sometimes expressed himself warmly con-

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated June 21st 1779.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated June 19th 1779.

cerning his state of destitution, which was of such a nature, that we have not the same courage to describe it that was shown by another biographer*. It may suffice, that we refer the reader for those details to the letters from the Donjon at Vincennes †. It was not, however, parental harshness alone which deprived him of clothes, linen, and the books he wanted, for he had both books and clothes in the trunks brought back from Holland; but those trunks furnished, at first, matter for strange inquiry, and his father wrote on that occasion ‡:—

"I replied that, this man, who was interdicted at Paris, had a decree passed against him in Provence, and had been condemned in Franche-Comté, possessed none of the rights which belong to a citizen; and it was strange that the authorities wished to acknowledge that he had rights, whilst the law refused him any §. But can you conceive that they will not deliver those trunks up to me? I had concerning them a rather sharp answer from M. de Maurepas. We are surely forgotten with a vengeance, both we and our ancestors,

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* Peuchet, vol. i. p. 266, and following.

† Vol. i. pp. 45, 126; vol. ii. pp. 28, 39—41; vol. iii. pp. 46, 93, 158, 436, 580; vol. iv. pp. 150, 165.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 3rd 1777.

§ Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis du Saillant, dated November 11th 1777.

that people presume to haggle and curtail our authority, when we confine our own offspring *."

We have already spoken of the condescension, in the first instance humane, afterwards friendly and benevolent, which Mirabeau experienced,—we do not say from the head of his family, who always refused him a cold impartiality, and even common justice, but from the authorities invested with the enforcement of rigour, the full weight of which it was hoped he would feel. No doubt he did not always immediately obtain all that his state of destitution required. No doubt also, that the more he obtained, the more eager he became, and the oftener he complained of the severe regulations to which he was subjected, and against which he sometimes protested with vehement bitterness†: nevertheless he obtained a great deal. He received, for instance, the portrait‡ of his unfortunate child, whom he loved most tenderly, with whose health, education, and future prospects he was continually occupied, and whom he was doomed to lose, without ever having seen the poor babe. He was even authorised to have his bust modelled, and sent to Sophie, who wrote to him on that occasion:—

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 15th 1780.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 125; vol. ii. p. 27.

‡ The same, vol. i. p. 250.

"What a fine thing is a signature, which brings us busts by post! But it is not you; and whatever is not you, is nothing but a bust to Sophie*!"

These are, surely, we must confess, very strange concessions "in the eye of prejudice†."

The mutual passion of the lovers, their anxiety about their child, and about the health of each other, their wants, their privations; the confidence of their wishes and illusions, their recollections and their hopes, their grief and their joy; the perseverance, the ability, the vigour, and the dignity, which Mirabeau displayed in his efforts to better their condition and obtain either their liberty or a judicial trial; the vast labours of every kind which always constituted his usual occupations and the solace of his life, and were now his only resource, developing and increasing his prodigious faculties, and preparing him for his future career:—these are the only facts to be found in the hundred and thirty letters, which compose Manuel's

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* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated April 24th 1780.

† These expressions have been already quoted, as contained in a letter from Mirabeau, inserted in Manuel's collection, vol. iii. p. 111. It was a direct favour from M. Lenoir (see the Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. ii. p. 87.); and Mirabeau valued it the more, because it had in the first instance been refused. See the same volume, p. 111. The portrait of little Sophie Gabrielle was afterwards sent to Mirabeau by M. Lenoir. See same volume, p. 250.

collection *. These facts are simply personal, and their interest, generally of an ephemeral nature, has been more lasting and become immortal, merely on account of the fame which the principal person to whom they relate subsequently acquired; and especially, on account of the ingenious diversity, ardent passion, and bitter and pathetic eloquence, both serious and picturesque, which always work upon the reader's mind, without the excitement ever flagging, during this long and monotonous succession of protests, complaints, entreaties, and endless repetitions.

But what still more essentially distinguishes this collection from all others, and identifies it with Mirabeau more closely than any author was ever identified with his work, is the incomparable power of the writer; the inexhaustible store of tenderness always alive in a heart which, even in its rage, is incapable of harbouring hatred or revenge †; that bold language, sometimes angry, always vehement, of

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* Of those hundred and thirty letters, sixty-nine were addressed to Sophie, forty-four to M. Lenoir, and seventeen to different individuals, such as the Marquis of Mirabeau, the king, the ministers, &c.

† "Such a feeling is quite foreign to my heart, to that burning heart which has undoubtedly led me to commit my errors, as it also made my happiness and grief, but which I would tear out with my own hands if I did not feel equally incapable of prostrating the weak and cringing to oppressors."—*Third Case for Counsel's Opinion, against the Marquis of Monnier*, p. 9.

a man free even in captivity; that innate, tenacious, and implacable hatred which he displays against despotism; that warm philanthropy, and vigilant patriotism that always made him look to the public good, even in his own particular cause*; and lastly, that peculiar organisation, that singular result, that unparalleled action of nature and study, of temper and fate, which raised a poor and infirm prisoner to a great statesman, and called forth from the horrors of a dungeon the restorer of the liberties of his country!

After this recapitulation, the accuracy of which has long since been proclaimed by the unanimous opinion of competent judges, we no longer require the letters from Vincennes. Though we have borrowed but in a comparatively small degree from them, we feel loth to increase our extracts. All the rest, consisting of

* "When the injustice which is submitted to public opinion, that tribunal which tries all judges, all the great of the earth, affects individual liberty, the most valuable property of a citizen, in one word, the most eminent of the rights of human nature, the repugnance which a man, endowed with any modesty, feels to trouble others with his private affairs, must yield to the duty of saying, maintaining, and proclaiming any useful truth to the defence of which his situation calls him. In such a case, every one can and ought to consider himself the defender of society; and he should then view his own cause as that of all his fellow-citizens." P. 3. of the Notice that precedes the Statement by the Count of Mirabeau, suppressed at the moment of its publication, by special order of the Keeper of the Seals, and re-published from respect for the king and justice; with a conversation on the subject, between the Keeper of the Seals and the Count of Mirabeau. 1784, 1 vol. 8vo.

development of character, sketches, narratives, theories, and controversies, which for the last forty years have been public property, we must, in repeating what has already been read by every one, confine our quotations as much as possible to cases of absolute necessity, either to complete a picture, or to do our duty by giving faithful delineations. We therefore take entire leave of the correspondence from Vincennes, and hasten to relate that which we have been obliged to defer: namely, the circumstances which, after many difficulties and delays, terminated Mirabeau's captivity. These particulars we shall gather only from our own unpublished materials.

Fifteen months after the commencement of his captivity, a domestic event, tending to procure the prisoner's release, had long been working a change, if not in the Marquis's heart, at any rate in his resolves. It originated in a personal motive springing from the pride of ancestry, and the love of having his name perpetuated. Thus then there was some chance of deliverance, which, in truth, was still deferred twenty-seven months, and would, perhaps, never have been obtained by Mirabeau's entreaties, nor by the justice of the case, nor indeed by public interference, from the inexorable father, with whom ministers had hitherto been blindly associated.

BOOK VIII.

By his wife Mirabeau had a son, whose features, character, and surprising faculties are equally extolled in the letters we possess. That child died October 8th 1778, the day on which it had attained its fifth year. That the father loved it tenderly, the letters from Vincennes furnish abundant proof*; for parental affection was one of the finest virtues of that great mind, whose natural tenderness had been greatly increased by misfortune. Sophie herself bears witness to it; and we may conceive how much the situation in which both the lovers were placed at the time of the effusions to which she refers, adds weight to a testimony so honourable to both.

"O my friend! we are then no longer in possession of our child, for I considered your son as mine. With what pleasure would I have been a mother to him! I but too plainly perceive your grief, though you

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* See particularly vol. i. p. 14; vol. ii. pp. 115, 379; vol. iii. pp. 219, 237; vol. iv. p. 329. See also Statements concerning Pontarlier; Lettres de Cachet, vol. ii. p. 99; Papers from Provence, &c.

attempt to disguise it. I know but too well how much you loved him; I remember how tenderly you spoke of him in the days of our happiness * !"

The death of this child plunged the family into deep dejection.

"I write you only a line, my dear brother, but a most distressing one. Your house is annihilated by the death of our poor child. Victor died the day before yesterday (the 8th), this being the day on which he had attained his fifth year. God gave him to us, and God has taken him away. For some time past, God has made me feel his great mercy by granting me resignation to his will †."

"I am informed," replied the Marquis, "of the death of our child, the last hope of our race. I have hitherto

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* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 329. We abstain from giving unnecessary particulars concerning this child; and hereafter we shall merely mention him very incidentally. We here transcribe a fragment, in which the Bailli gives an interesting account of him.

"The poor little creature would not have been like the madman who procreated him. In him reason and mildness seemed clothed and incarnate. It was never necessary, in any matter of moment, to tell him the same thing twice. He one day asked why his father was in prison. His mother told him that a son should not speak of his father if he had nothing good to say of him, and that being in prison was not good. No one ever heard the poor child speak any more of his father, whilst he constantly enquired after his grandfather Mirabeau."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated November 13th 1778.*

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated October 10th 1778

thought I inherited from my mother a mind incapable of strong emotion. I had succeeded in resisting and smothering all the internal volcanoes which can unsettle a man exempt from remorse. God wished to undeceive me, by this last dispensation he wished to wean me from earth. I could not refrain from asking him, with more sobs than I ever uttered in all my life, either to call me to immediate judgment, or to grant me another conscience that might unfold the crimes by which I have deserved so heavy a burthen of misfortune. I have endeavoured to be a good son, a good brother, a good husband, a good father, and a good neighbour; to be honest in my dealings, and accommodating. I never did nor wished to do injury to a human being. I seem however to be an especial object of Heaven's wrath. After having for a long time repelled the cruel feeling of being an object of pity to myself, I have fallen into another, even more distressing, namely, self-disgust *!"

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 21st 1778.

It was thought in the family, and we ourselves can attest, that Mesdames de Cabris and du Saillant, who survived this event, the one twenty-nine, the other forty-four years, always said that Mirabeau's child had been poisoned by collaterals, who never ceased to covet the mother's inheritance, and in some measure forced her in 1783 to sue for a divorce. Mirabeau believed it, as may be seen in the Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. pp. 220, 237, 297. It will surely not be expected that we should furnish evidence of this crime, which could not be found should the supposition be true.

Victor's mother was inconsolable.

" Poor Marignane wrote me a letter which proves

But, to explain this family tradition since published, we have extracted several passages from the letters of the Marquis of Mirabeau. Before he was even made acquainted with the event, he wrote: —

" I have received a letter from my daughter-in-law, with notes from her father, informing me of very serious accidents that have befallen my grandson. Notwithstanding all the assurances which press upon me, and the arguments of Doctor Santi to prove that he is troubled with worms or spasms, I infer no good from it; and my old age has so much been inured to the thought of all possible horrors, that I can scarcely abstain from recollecting the recommendations, long since repeated, and addressed to me from the very country, not to leave so precious a child in a place where his prospects might mar those of others."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 17th* 1778.

He had written two years before: —

" I should be more afraid if we were condemned to such thoughts, that the life of that child might stand in the way of collaterals, against whom anonymous letters attempt to excite my suspicions."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 30th* 1776.

Finally, six months after the event, he again wrote: —

" I all at once hear that my grandson, my only hope, the hope of my house and my ancestors, a child of singular promise from his kindness of heart and powers of mind, is taken ill, and has a pain in his stomach that makes him utter cries, and produces convulsions. Must I tell you all my dear friend? Infamous anonymous letters had long before informed me that I was leaving that child too long in a country where he was the only obstacle to great expectations of people in bad repute. As it has pleased God, in my old age, this book of human horrors, which I never should have known, has been but too well unfolded to me. The first intelligence I received informed me that my grandson was not in danger; but I inferred evil from it. The next post apprised me of his

his affliction *. Emily is in gloomy despair. I yesterday saw this poor mother arrive at Mirabeau. She was taken ill as soon as she entered, and I felt

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death! The first moment was cruel. During five years I have resisted the feeling of being an object of pity to myself. It would be necessary to recollect all that I must have suffered, to force my nature, feelings, and even vanity, so as to accustom myself to tear away a veil which I had held for thirty years with so much anguish, and with it covered all my wounds; to relish public scandal, the opprobrium cast upon my name, calumny; to haunt at my time of life the ante-chambers of judges, ministers, secretaries, commissioners, exempts, and ever so many more, and to have to pick up and gather all kinds of horrors and all sorts of stigmas! What a sacrifice to the inheritance of my venerable ancestors! What an end to a career ambitious of esteem! It is therefore not surprising if I have sometimes felt tempted to pity myself. But the moment I received this new dispensation of Providence, I conceived all at once a disgust of myself."—*Unpublished letter of the Marquis of Mirabeau to Le Franc of Pompignan, dated April 26th* 1779.

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated October 10th 1778. We have several affecting letters from the Countess of Mirabeau, but extract only a single passage from them:—

"I did not wish to leave to papa the care of answering your letter. I wished to thank you for the interest you take in my afflictions. A tender mother alone can feel what I suffer since my poor Victor has been taken from me. I have lost in him not only all my hopes and the only fruit of the pain I endured, but also the most tender friend. Do not mistake my expressions for prejudice: my child was everything to me. He felt for my afflictions, and was happy only so long as he thought his mother so. I daily discovered some new seed of virtue in his soul, and no defect appeared in him. This child was also much too forward for his age, and he has been cut off prematurely to my eternal sorrow."—*Unpublished letter from the Countess of Mirabeau to Madame du Saillant, dated November 9th* 1778.

great compassion for her. She cannot bear to remain here, but wishes me to conduct her to you. Marignane had already told me, that when she was able to listen to him, he would propose her going to Paris to divert her attention. Are you not of opinion that we should take her at her word, and risk the consequences * ?"

This project pleased the Marquis, whatever might be his intentions.

"This post has brought me a letter from my daughter-in-law; it is long and full of feeling, depicting very naturally her situation. She tells me that she has now no other desire than to be in her poor child's family. I was much affected at this mark of confidence, which is at least a justice done to me; and I have answered her as I ought, and as the feeling she evinces towards me deserves *."

The Bailli availing himself of the circumstance, tried to interest her for the prisoner.

"Corruption has much increased, notwithstanding the outrages and indignities of those vile libels which have appeared in behalf of your wife. People continue to think you rather severe towards your child. Are you not fearful therefore that it might be whispered into this young woman's ear, that she can no longer

* Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated November 6th 1778.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 26th 1778.

reside under your roof without her husband? With regard to him, in this country with the compassion of which you are acquainted, it will be said, that his case is some irregularity; that his elopement with a woman is a youthful prank, pardonable at his time of life. For you know the morals of Babylon; it is surely the city towards which Jugurtha looked back *!"

"Let people say what they please," replied the inexorable Marquis, "but let every one do with their own madman, and with those over whom Providence has placed them, that which we do with ours, and we shall no longer hear of so many complaints and abominations. Let me moreover be accused of prejudice, of severity, of persecution, of revenge: it is in accordance with human cogitations and disputes. I laugh at it till my shoulders shake; but I live at a time when praise is to be obtained only by some folly or crime. I know that we are here below exposed to iniquity, and should we not be able to defend ourselves, we have as it were given up the hammer, and are absolutely nothing more than an anvil. Consequently, I am more stiff in my old muscles than

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated November 26th 1778. The last sentence is an allusion to the celebrated saying of Jugurtha, mentioned by Sallust:—"Sed postquam Româ egressus est, fertur, sæpe tacitus eo respiciens, postremo dixisse: URBEM VENALEM, ET MATURE PERITURAM, SI EMPTOREM INVENIRET.

firm on my legs, and I constantly strive to hold converse with my soul. I daily submit my plans to Providence; for I have always been of opinion that human impatience and affections are attempts at revolt, paltry imitations of the crime of Satan; and that in earthly justice and good fame, as in youth, health, riches, power, and duration, all human regret is a mere spite at not being God. Finally, after having daily sounded and cleansed my heart, in His presence, I feel but the more bent on persisting, and I say unto myself, 'If you mistake, and your project is unjust, Providence, which sees clearer, will bring it to nought *.'"

Unfortunately, the bereaved mother was unable to execute her project of going to Paris.

"Your unhappy daughter-in-law is on the eve of sustaining another afflicting loss. In compliance with your letter of the 17th, she was about to leave with the intention of joining you, when Marignane received intelligence that the Count of Valbalie was dying, having been given over. He and the Count are very intimate friends. Poor Marignane burst into tears, and is in despair. You may imagine that Emily cannot leave her father at such a moment, and I should even have opposed her doing so †."

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 7th 1778.

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mira-

The Marquis was easily reconciled to this change of purpose.

" I did not much calculate upon it, and I expected them with as much interest and impatience as I should look for an itinerary of the swallows in spring. Besides, I cannot help it. These four words have proved a balm to me through life; and if they had come, I could not have helped laughing whilst thinking how much my tongue and my jawbone would

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beau, dated November 23rd 1778. In two letters from the Countess of Mirabeau, we find the fact confirmed which had so great an influence over her husband's destiny.

" I feel most painfully the overthrow of all my projects, and being deprived of seeing my father-in-law and yourself. It is the only thing I wish for at present. Providence has not willed that it should be so. Another misfortune has fallen upon my poor father. He experiences a serious loss by being deprived of his friend. I am necessary to console him, and I sacrifice myself entirely to the attempt to be useful to him. To-morrow I am going to confine myself at Marignane, with the women who were attached to the unfortunate Count of Valbelle. I shall now be occupied in finding a favourable opportunity to repair my present loss; for I can by no means renounce the pleasure of seeing my adopted family."—*Unpublished letter from the Countess of Mirabeau to Madame du Saillant, dated November 26th* 1778.

" I was in hopes of seeing you this year; but, when I spoke of it to papa, he objected to it, and expressed a wish that I should remain with him. I have lost the favourable moment, but cannot reproach myself for it, as I remained only that I might be of service to him, in his affliction at the loss of M. de Valbelle. I have therefore merely done my duty by sacrificing to him one of my fondest wishes."—*Letter from the Countess of Mirabeau to Madame du Saillant, dated August 10th* 1779.

have rendered me a worthy legatee of the Court of Love *."

This event, and some months later, the Count of Valbelle's death, prevented the intended journey, which, after all, perhaps would not have produced much good, if we may judge from the Marquis of Mirabeau's declaration.

" As to the inmate of Vincennes, independently of the crimes which a man never shakes off, he has innate extravagance; and such is the bent of his mind, that, if he had not committed any thing wrong, it would still be expedient to put him out of the way †.

" Supposing even his public crimes not to have occurred, I know him to be not only impious and wicked, and this not owing to any physical defect, but to be naturally a fool. Even St. Paul's conversion, which would change any other man, could not remodel this fellow. It is not therefore in my power to commit a cruelty through vanity, and to recouple such a personage, and thereby stitch the castle of Marignane on to the castle of Mirabeau ‡."

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau. dated November 26th 1778. *The Court of Love* is an allusion to the numerous and brilliant society, of ladies in particular, which continually assembled at the Count of Valbelle's magnificent mansion at Aix and at the Castle of Tourbes.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 10th 1778.

‡ Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated November 28th 1778.

The Bailli, on the other hand, seemed resigned.

"For my part, the dejection into which our fortune has thrown us, does not prevent me acknowledging that, considering the times, the lo morals, and all that a thoughtless and unbridled such as ours forebodes to posterity, I can scarcely compassion for an extinct race when it had been posed of only good and virtuous noblemen *. I therefore wish you were as resigned as I am respe postero-mania †."

Nevertheless, he was secretly endeavourin prevail upon Mirabeau to make concessions t father. Knowing the interest M. Boucher took i prisoner, the Bailli wrote to that gentleman. The measures were taken at the end of May 1779. O 2nd of June, Boucher wrote to Mirabeau in following terms:—

"Your friend, who does not give his name, ha observed to me, that it might appear strange to father to receive a letter from you, I this morning a letter signed by the magistrate (M. Lenoir) to ac pany your own ‡."

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* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mira dated December 13th 1778.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated D ber 29th 1778.

‡ Unpublished letter from M. Boucher to Mirabeau, dated 2nd 1779.

On the other hand, the Marquis wrote on the following day:—

"Yesterday I received a letter from M. Lenoir, who informs me that whilst he was visiting the prisoners, he saw my son, who begged that he might be permitted to write to me, to you, and to his wife; that he could not refuse him, &c. Had I been affected or even slightly moved by this letter, it would not have had the remotest effect upon my way of thinking, nor induced me to change the line of conduct which is permanently decided upon in my soul and conscience, and which I shall pursue, at all events, towards this personage, because every thing is founded upon the conviction, after mature reflection, that such is my duty. But the letter has done neither the one nor the other, and I leave him upon the dunghill of his crimes *."

Who would imagine, on reading this harsh language, that the same man wrote, on the same day, in the same letter, and just as naturally:—

"My poor vassals suffer a great deal at this season of the year, when a dearth is to be expected, and after such a dreadful winter! When one sees the poor devils come from a league off, in such weather, and ask, as a favour, to propel a wheelbarrow for ten sous a day, we can only thank God for having placed us in a situation to give them this sum, and consider a

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 3rd 1779.

very serious fault, every thing that prevents us from making such use of our means, especially with my public and private principles *."

Who would also imagine that, at the same period, the Marquis experienced misfortunes which would have softened any other temper but his? His friend Lefranc of Pompignan fell dangerously ill, and the Marchioness obtained a judgment against him. These events threw him into an extraordinary state of dejection. A few days previously, he had written as follows:—

"It is not the testimony of man that I seek; it is not their justice that I am eager for:—but if my existence is a burthen to me, what would it be to others? Surrounded with crimes; the mother, and four out of five children imprisoned; wreck of name, wreck of fortune, wreck of friends—what can I feel within myself that could secure me against the dispensations of Providence which leave me so long in the tun of Regulus?

"If these are mere reverses, they are the lot of all men; but if they suppose a wrong side, I never had one. My house descended to me in a flourishing, healthy state, unincumbered with debts or lawsuits, fragrant with honour and dignity—an object of general esteem. In what a state is it now? Let us go no farther; but

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 3rd 1779.

you must feel how and wherefore my inward conscience calls for witnesses. Those are to be regretted who could have shown that my youth was timid and willing, my mature age painful and constant. If in my subsidiary labours, subordinate to my natural duties *, I am one of those who have called out from the top of the minaret, I did so for the good of all, without, on the other hand, ever having sought that unfortunate celebrity which is the only thing now left to me, and which, if I valued it, I should now have to divide with all the impious and the mad. At no period of my life was I ever vain or wicked †."

We have just stated that the Marquis had received a letter from his son; let us examine what this letter was, which had been preceded by an imprisonment of two years, and which, coming from the pen of such a man, had failed in "affecting" or even "slightly moving" an irritated father; a letter on the subject of which Mirabeau wrote the same day:

"Here is the letter which has cost me a bad night, though no pain; for the recollection of a father always excites one's feelings, and I wrote it without making a rough copy. How eased does my heart feel since I have written it ‡!"

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* Allusion to his works on Political Economy.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 5th 1779.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 5th 1779.

" My dear father, I feel it both a duty and a necessity to solicit your pardon for my faults, and from the bottom of my heart I bitterly regret the pain they have occasioned you. I have no right to say to you: erase from your memory my numerous errors, a great portion of which I humbly trust I have expiated by so many years of continued misfortune and dreadful captivity. This is not sufficient, I confess; and to obtain that favour from you, it would be necessary, were it possible, to offer a reparation. But, my father, is this possible, in my present situation? Will you deny me even the hope of recovering, at least in part, the rights which nature has given to me, upon your heart, and of resuming those sacred duties she has imposed upon me towards you? My father, I am far from desiring to excuse myself. I wrote to you, on the contrary, with the conscience of a guilty man, who accuses himself, and begs for mercy from his judge. Do not deny it to me, I beseech you, and allow me to say that you ought not to refuse it: for whatever may have been the expression of my resentment, that very crime has given me a claim upon your generosity and a right to your pardon, since it has rendered my offence personal to yourself. But, I swear, in all the sincerity of my heart, really not depraved, that the severity which I have no doubt wrongly interpreted, and of which I fancied I had a right to complain, has never driven from my bosom the affection and respect I owe to you;

that I have never entertained the thought of taking part against you in the lamentable lawsuit that has divided and mutilated our family.

" My father, you say, and think that I am a madman. If I am one, I have at least a claim upon your pity, and my situation is cruel in the extreme. But I am not mad, although I have been guilty of the greatest follies. Two years of solitude have enabled me to search into the recesses of my heart, which is good, though impetuous. My mind is composed of good and evil. It is my imagination, fervid, fiery, and unsteady, which has caused my errors, my faults, and my misfortunes. The former man no longer exists; but were he still the same, a benefit, such as that which would restore me to your presence and to existence, would bind him to you for ever.

" My father, you do not believe that I am wicked. If I were so, I might say to you: 'no man possesses a right of rendering those unhappy, whom he cannot render good.' But, Heaven be praised! I am not wicked. I promise you, nay, I swear, that my most ardent wish is to make amends for the sorrow I have occasioned you, and that I will never increase its measure. If I violate this oath, I shall not retain the slightest claim to the indulgence of any one, and you will assuredly be justified in casting me off for ever. If you do not look upon me as the most wicked and insensate of men, you may then be convinced

of the sincerity of this confession of my errors, and that of my resolutions. Consult your own heart, my father, and deign to tell me if it still dictates your son's proscription *."

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his father, dated May 28th 1779. Mirabeau ended this pathetic letter with an Italian sonnet, no less affecting, and which we insert here:—

" Padre, che pur sei padre, ancor che offeso,
E l'antica pietà spenta non hai;
Ma spiacque a te di giusto sdegno acceso
Sempre la colpa, il peccator non mai.
Gravando ognor sulle tue spalle il peso,
Se contre il ciel sugli occhi tuoi peccai
Io nol dirò ch' indarno a te il paleso,
Che il tutto vedi, onde pur troppo il sai.
Diro bensi, che gia gran tempo io sono
Indegno che tuo figlio altri mi chiami;
E più non merto a falli miei perdono.
Ma, di tua carità sono i legami
Cotanto in se tenaci, e tu si buono,
Che ingrati ancora il figli tuoi pur ami."

He added a translation of this sonnet.

" Gentleman amateurs," he wrote to Boucher and Dupont, both of them excelling in, and passionately fond of, music, " if you do not understand Italian sufficiently to guess the meaning of this sonnet, the following is a translation of it, or at least nearly so; but it does not give the elegance, the harmony, and the conciseness of the original, which is a prayer addressed to the Almighty.

" ' Oh Father! Thou art ever a Father, although offended; and hast not exhausted thy former mercy, for thy just wrath is ever kindled against the crime, and not against the criminal. If, continually increasing the weight of my errors, which thou hast taken upon thyself, I sin against heaven, I will not tell it to thee, for the confession is useless to thee who seest everything, and therefore knowest.

This letter obtained no other reply than the following formal acknowledgment of having received it, written by the Marquis to M. Lenoir.

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all. But I will say that I have long been unworthy of being called thy son, and my errors deserve no longer any pardon ; but the bonds of thy charity are so strong, and thou art so good, that thou still lovest thy ungrateful sons.'

" These ideas, in the abstract, are common-place, but the expression, in Italian, is truly charming, and I thought the application would not prove displeasing: read, gentlemen, and decide."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated May 28th* 1779.

It appears, however, that Dupont and Boucher advised the suppression of the sonnet, and Mirabeau consented to it. The following passage explains both his and their motive:—" With regard to the sonnet, I willingly accede to your opinion. It is true that verses throw a coldness over a letter, though it is not equally so that they cannot proceed from a heart strongly excited. On the contrary, the feelings must be acted upon before the mind can produce good verses. Since I have been here I have composed some music, weeping bitterly all the while; and my music is good precisely because I wept."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated May 31st* 1779.

Mirabeau's musical recreations caused him some vexation. " I must inform you, my dear friend, that although there are others, particularly two persons, who sing all day, M. de Rougemont wants to forbid my singing, as being contrary to the discipline of a state prison. I further inform you, that I have replied that I had sung, that I still sang, and that I should continue to sing until death prevented me. It is true the ladies come to the window to listen to me; but it is not my fault if I have a good voice, and M. Lenoir, who has had the kindness to offer me all sorts of musical instruments, does not, I presume, intend to forbid me the use of this voice. In a word, I was born, thank God, with an obstinate disposition to resist every sort of tyranny, and I shall never change."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated April 12th* 1780.

"I have received the letter you have done me the honour of writing to me, and the one you were so kind as to inclose. I can only thank you for the trouble you have taken."

Nevertheless, this sentence delighted the kind mediator, who did not hope for even so much. He immediately wrote to Mirabeau, in these terms:—

"If this does not indicate satisfaction, at all events it betokens no anger, nor even ill-humour *."

Mirabeau wrote to his uncle at the same time. We do not insert his letter, because it is little more than a repetition of the one to his father. The kind-hearted Bailli moved with pity, but checked by the superstitious respect he bore to his elder brother, knew not to which of these feelings he ought to yield.

"For my part, I confess I am puzzled how to reply. You are a father, a title respectable and respected, at all times and in all places. I even think I have learnt from history that the manners of a country have always been more or less moral, in proportion to the influence of parental authority. But, with regard to uncles, beginning with the decalogue, they are not comprised in any law, and whatever is conceded to them is mere matter of favour, as is also what they give. Thus, I find myself much perplexed. However I am here harassed to death, and in a

* Unpublished letter from Boucher to Mirabeau, dated June 7th 1779. See the Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 207.

manner the more fatiguing, because it proceeds from praiseworthy feelings. I perceive that those Provençal gentry seeing one of their best and most noble-minded races on the point of being swept from the face of the earth, are in great distress. In fact, I am here, only the Evangelist; but the Evangelist says, that if the pride of that gentleman has come down so far as to have allowed him to write with his own hand what you have received, he thinks he is properly humbled, and has reflected seriously. Confinement renders a man mad; half-madmen return to their senses. I therefore am of opinion, that if his pride bends, there may be some amendment. I allow you, however, to place this among the number of gratuitous suppositions *."

The Bailli having thus timidly expressed himself, submitted to his brother's choice two models of a letter. In one, every species of assistance was refused; and we do not insert it here, because it is in the collection from Vincennes †.

The other, a very long one, was less discouraging. We extract only a few words from it.

"I am very angry with your sister ‡, who has

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 11th 1779.

† Vol. iii. p. 444.

‡ This alludes to a statement which Madame de Cabris had just published, defending herself against her husband's family, who disputed her right, from very injurious motives, to the guardianship of her husband, then in a state of mental alienation.

been your accomplice. It is nevertheless to that circumstance that you owe the interest I am about to take in you. I mistrust my own feelings, and as I am far from possessing that pride and presumption which have hitherto formed the basis of your character, in spite of my age and experience, if I refused my intercession for you, I should be afraid of mistaking the motive of my refusal, and that personal outrage, the bitterness of which I have severely felt, might influence my firmness in this matter *."

This assurance, so consolatory for the unfortunate captive, was still to be denied him. The Marquis thus replied to the Bailli :—

" I have rendered justice, in my capacity of natural and domestic judge, and I could see, unmoved by remorse, the mother in the pillory, and the son on the gallows tree! I should, nevertheless, carry my head erect, and my bosom bare. Thus, for my part, every thing is settled. With regard to others, his outrageous mother, who is strongly urged to come to some arrangement, always puts forward that her worthy offspring must first be restored to freedom.

" Thus, there is nothing yet to be done in the business. With regard to his wife, I have always said, and thought, that she alone could do any thing, as she

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* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to his nephew, joined to one addressed to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 11th 1779.

alone has a right. God forbid that I should reason upon all this. My mind is made up: I will neither act nor advise in the business. Such is my decision. As for what concerns yourself, you know better how to act than I do, and can act more firmly; but I pass judgment only upon the two letters which you have submitted, in some degree, to my approval. I shall keep them until I see whether any letters come from the Countess; in which case I will send the shortest of yours, because it places you more out of the business than otherwise. But if no letters arrive, I shall keep both, as I do not think it proper that this negociation should involve you*."

Another mediator presented himself, partly solicited by Mirabeau, and partly induced by another party, as will presently appear.

"This winter, they † applied to Dupont ‡. A letter

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 20th 1779.

"I have simply forwarded your short letter and that of the Countess to M. Lenoir."—*Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 8th* 1779.

† M. and Madame du Saillant.

‡ Dupont, so well known by the name of Dupont de Nemours. A thousand passages in the Correspondence from Vincennes prove that the family and Dupont acted in concert; so much so, that Mirabeau, in that correspondence, continually accuses him of great injustice, and of sacrificing the persecuted to the persecutor. Notwithstanding this, Peuchet, in vol. i. p. 404, asserts: "Dupont's proceedings remained for a length of time unknown to the family;

from the gentleman reached the latter under the greatest secresy, begging him to see M. Boucher, a clerk of the secret police, though not very secret himself, who proposed to him to see M. Lenoir; and afterwards the Count. Dupont, who was Turgot's right arm, when M. Lenoir* was turned out, and who consequently cannot trust himself to the latter, at first declined; but on his return from the country, he went to see the fellow, and gave him his advice. They formed their plots, and the consequence was those letters we received. On the reception of the replies, M. Boucher forwarded them to Dupont, informing him that he found them too harsh, too unrelenting, and did not dare forward them. Dupont sent them back again with an answer, that if the gentleman expected his family would make him excuses, it was needless to correspond*."

Mirabeau had, in fact, asked to see Dupont.

"I think I have perceived that he endeavours to reach me. Nature has lavished upon him all those gifts which do not depend upon man; and he has greatly enriched this happy disposition. I do not know any one who possesses to such an extent that

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they became known all of a sudden, and the Marquis was violently irritated at not having been informed of them before."

* 1774.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 7th 1779.

nobleness which is not written in ink upon old parchments. I value this latter much less, when found alone, because I myself possess it; but I highly prize that which is engraven on the heart of man in sacred and indelible characters. He will console, aid, and procure me literary assistance. I shall, at least, open my bleeding heart to one who appreciates and understands it, and will answer me. Do not imagine that his indulgence is what I love in him. He has too high an idea of my talents and of the little merit I possess; but nobody ever told me the truth more undisguisedly. He is not blind to my defects, neither will he flatter my errors, although he is not ignorant of the origin of them *."

Whatever Mirabeau might hope from Dupont's intercession, he was anxious to be indebted for it to a feeling of esteem, more than to the emotion of pity. He was therefore desirous that his situation and his case should be first fully explained to his friend; the more so, because he was aware of the kind of moral dependence in which the latter was placed with regard to the Marquis, who might have prejudiced him against his unhappy son.

Mirabeau therefore wrote :—

" The agitation of my heart on seeing again this dear

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated January 18th 1779.

friend whom I had not embraced for eight years, the natural warmth of conversation, the confusion of my ideas, jarring together, crowding and annihilating each other, the baneful spell of solitude, which has deprived me of the facility of expressing myself,—all this rendered me utterly incapable of explaining every thing in so short a time with the necessary precision. How indeed was it possible for me to state, during a rapid interview, and in presence of a third person unknown to me, all that was important for me that Dupont should know? Entreat M. Lenoir to permit my forwarding to him the letter I sent you for my father, dated March 2nd 1778*. It contains an account of my conduct during eight years, which is absolutely necessary, in order that Dupont may be made acquainted both with my faults in their true light, and with their causes and excuses, and also with the resources I have left. He cannot give me good advice, unless every thing on both sides is fully known to him. Had I no other reason for forwarding these explanations than the pleasure of clearing myself in his mind from two or three errors, of which he is persuaded I am guilty, and which, for my life, I would not have committed, I could

* He here alludes to the noble justification we have quoted so often, and which is at the end of the first volume of the "Original Letters written from the Donjon of Vincennes," pp. 287—436. Dupont saw it as Mirabeau desired. See Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 262.

wish, at any price, that he should hear me, because I desire neither the friendship nor the pity, of those I even cherish the most, unless they also grant me their esteem, which I believe, and indeed know I deserve, and am determined to deserve. I am a 'madman,' as much as they please, but an honest man as long as I please, that is, as long as I live *. He can less misunderstand what relates to me, because I have fully stated every thing that can enable him to read the bottom of my soul; and if my explanations do not justify all, I dare assert they will excuse all, and raise an interest in my favour. But as it is in writing that I like to make my manifestos, because what remains is the touchstone of good faith, I beg of you to send him my letter, however much it may alarm your timid prudence †."

Mirabeau took these steps, at the instigation not only of his friends and advisers, but also of Sophie, whose generous disinterestedness deserves to be known. She had taken upon herself to write to the Marquis of Mirabeau, accusing herself, and begging for the liberation of the prisoner. Mirabeau, who had vainly endeavoured to dissuade her from making this application, wrote:—

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated May 8th 1779.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated May 8th 1779.

"Ah! tell me—Would you yourself pardon me, if I had allowed an opportunity to escape of expressing to her my gratitude for her sublime conduct? She meditated a folly, be it so; but was not this folly the transport of an infinitely noble and feeling heart, of the most elevated and enchanting mind? Alas! she will not be understood! Another Sophie alone could appreciate and admire all the dignity of such proceeding.

"Tell her that her letter is gone; for you can feel that her heart beats with love and impatience *."

We must, however, say that this letter was "understood," for the Marquis spoke feelingly respecting it.

"This letter is, in truth, well penned. I replied as I ought, and my answer enchanted her woman's 'mad and overheated imagination.' I have received a letter now at my feet, and the 'petites maisons romanesques †.' I think that all the mad men and women have concerted together to pay me respect ‡."

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* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated August 22nd 1779. Afterwards, Mirabeau, in writing to the same individual, thus expressed himself:—

"You have kept a copy; read again and again her eloquent letter to my father. The great Rousseau would have been proud at having written it. It is as strong in argument as overflowing with sensibility; I do not feel myself skilful enough to refute her even if I wished to do so."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated November 1st* 1779.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 3rd 1779.

Mirabeau wrote on this occasion:—

"My father's conduct affects me, and you will observe it in the few words I have written to him. Alas! if, in his old age, he regrets the consequences of his severity, I must forget them, and pity him *."

Another equally affecting proof of that prompt return of sensibility so natural to Mirabeau, is found in the following passage:—

"At length, this father conducts himself with a tardy and slow, but rare generosity!

"If I succeed in drawing one tear from him, I shall be rewarded for all that his despotism has made me lose and suffer †!"

At this same period, Sophie planned an attempt no less noble and delicate, and which Dupont and Boucher prevented her from accomplishing. We see in the letters from Vincennes ‡, that she wanted to apply to the Countess of Mirabeau herself; and the object of her generous efforts was to prevent the steps which

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated September 11th 1779. Mirabeau, alluding to the same subject, said some time after:

"It is a great deal that my father has been touched. Confess that Sophie is an admirable creature."—*Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated November 8th* 1779.

† Unpublished letter, already quoted, from Mirabeau to Madlle Danvers. We repeat, that there could be nothing written to be read by his father in this letter to a young lady totally unknown to the family, and who never went near them.

‡ Vol. iii, p. 443.

Mirabeau, tired of waiting, was desirous of taking immediately. His intention was to apply to the higher authorities, whom he supposed tired of their own rigour, a project known to Sophie, and which the prisoner had also mentioned to Boucher :—

"I confide to your honour and friendship, good angel, that Dupont appeared to me so uneasy lest my father should be forced to yield, if he delayed it too long, that I thought M. de Maurepas might have said something. Keep what I tell you secret. M. de Maurepas knows of my correspondence with Sophie. Could not M. Lenoir, my worthy benefactor, and yourself, hint to the 'all-powerful,' that since he permitted that important favour which has saved my life, he surely cannot desire to ruin me; and that if he does not wish to blind, stupify, or kill me, he must, at least, think about restoring me to a half freedom *."

To dismiss at once this particular subject, we here insert short extracts, proving, that in fact, Mirabeau, in spite of his father's very great influence, would have had some chance of obtaining his release, if, instead of asking it from his family alone, he had persisted in applying to the authorities.

"Dupont proved to me that Honoré, during the last year, resisted every possible suggestion which assured

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated August 1st 1779.

him he could obtain his liberation without me. Fortunately, he took the right side, and would not act *. If I had not released my son, my enemies would have forced him from me, and all would have thrown the accusing stone at me †. It is but too true that the police, which were at his orders, wanted to force me. Do you wish to know what had become of the respect for morals and the paternal sceptre, under that old hare-brained de Maurepas? When Nivernois asked him in my name for an order to cut the correspondence short, and send away Brianson and other adherents of the gang, he found him prepared, and highly exasperated. He received for answer :—

" ' Here are sixty letters or orders for the Mirabeau family! It would require a secretary of state on purpose for them. If all who live by intrigue were to be sent out of Paris, the grass would grow in the streets. The father really takes me for his agent. Is it not a shame that there should be no end to these scandalous family feuds? The king will hear no more about them ‡.' "

Although Mirabeau's impatience was perfectly

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 19th 1781.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated February 16th 1781.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 17th 1781. The Duke of Nivernois married the sister of Count Maurepas.

justifiable, it did not induce him to have recourse to the treacherous manœuvre of which he was then accused by the habitual prejudice of his father, an accusation which several biographers have since repeated, either when speaking of this fact, or of others equally false, or much exaggerated. The following is what he wrote to Boucher on this occasion:

"It must be owned, my dear friend, that I am a happy mortal! Do you know the new incident that strews with thorns my unfortunate career, and digs new precipices in my path? Dupont, whom I have just seen, informs me that a statement has appeared on behalf of my mother, in which 'my style has been recognised.' This production has been shown to my father as written by me. He is grievously offended at it, the more so because it has been hawked about at Versailles, and presented to the Queen and Madame, both of whom refused to have any thing to do with it. Dupont complained dreadfully, and with reason, of such a train having been laid unknown to him. He had nothing to say when I called to witness every thing sacred in the world, and M. Lenoir, and yourself, that it was both false and impossible: but you must admit that I am a most unfortunate man! Read, I beseech you, the inclosed letter for M. Lenoir, and find some means of clearing me of the imputation with my father; for Dupont has been pusillanimous enough not to defend me. The surest way of delivering me from this

execrable charge, is to discover the author of the statement. Reflect deeply upon the matter, and extricate me from this new labyrinth *. I entreat you, good angel, to allow of no false security founded upon my letter of the day before yesterday. Be assured that we shall have a great deal of trouble in undeceiving my father. Now, he is the only person to undeceive: the others will not suspect me. With regard to what you mention respecting my imagination, you are right. I am sensitive to excess, and am not sorry for it; but setting that aside, who could coldly hear himself cruelly taxed with infamy †?"

We lately mentioned the impassioned eagerness of Sophie, when using every means to assist Mirabeau. Some time after, an attempt of this nature gave rise to an incident, too trifling to mention, otherwise than in a note; and we should not even think it worth while to insert it all, were it not related in the correspondence from the donjon of Vincennes, although by no means sufficiently explained ‡.

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* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated October 3rd 1779.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated October 5th 1779.

‡ Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. pp. 499, 505, 508, 513, 524, 536, 539, 542, 588, 594, 597; vol. iv. pp. 30, 39. The following is extracted from a letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau.

"I believe I told you that this man writes to whomever he pleases, and also that everything reaches him. It is the same thing at the

But these repeated attempts of Sophie were suggested to her by what she knew of the moral disposition of

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Convent of Gien, where *his* Sophie is; they write to each other, console each other, and advise each other. The complaisant police approves of everything: for the most corrupt are the most tolerant, and the romance continues. He has obtained warm adherents, and has no more wanted for testimonials of good conduct than for the support which made him master in a place which he entered only for the purpose of remaining buried."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 3rd* 1779.

" But here comes another piece of business: the Chevalier (afterwards Viscount) arrived from Montargis, with a mysterious romance. He was requested to go to Gien; he went thither post haste. They made him assume a disguise, and thus gain admittance into the convent of your fictitious sister-in-law. This wiseacre conversed with another wiseacre of the other sex, who spoke of her passion, of the illness of her beloved, of his eyes, his colic, and all the customary elegies, and exacted the Chevalier's promise to obtain his release *."

Now comes the contradiction, written by the Marquis himself.

" At the same moment I received a letter addressed to me, and inside it the words 'for the Chevalier Mirabeau,' begging me moreover to read it before I forwarded it. This letter was from Gien, from the convent of the Lady Monnier, who, expressing herself in a polite and humble manner towards me, spoke her mind plainly to the Chevalier, saying she was sorry to prove him guilty of such dastardly meanness as a malicious falsehood, defying him to maintain it, or to bring forward the slightest evidence whatever in support of it; and to tell her whether she is tall or short, dark or fair †."

Lastly, we have a formal retraction, addressed by the Viscount to the Bailli.

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to M. du Saillant, dated July 3rd 1779.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 3rd 1779.

the prisoner, who really was weary of his fruitless applications to his father. The latter, at the same period, wrote thus:—

"With regard to his letters, I do not even acknowledge the receipt of them *."

Mirabeau, meanwhile, continued to apply to his uncle, whom the past had taught him to appreciate, and whose true feelings he plainly discovered under

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"I had asked my father's permission to spend a couple of days at Montargis, where several persons had invited me for the festival of St. Magdalen. I have in that town a sister, who is a nun; there also resides a lady who brought her up *, as well as my nieces †. This lady, whom I visited every day, because my family is under the greatest obligations to her, had just received a letter from the Marchioness of Monnier, begging her to apply to my father for my brother's release, as he had sore eyes and an attack of stone. They spoke to me of the lady, told me how easy it would be to see her, stating the name of her physician, &c. Having remained a fortnight at Montargis, I was fearful I should be ill received on my return to Bignon. I arrived at this latter place full of the whole history of Gien. Thinking that it would be merely laughed at and then forgotten, I endeavoured to excuse my delay by a romance which I fabricated; I maintained this falsehood, which I imagined would harm no one, and I now learn that the king, the councillors of state, and the devil himself, are interfering in the matter ‡."

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 10th 1779.

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* Madame de Remiguy.

† The daughters of Madame du Saillant.

‡ Letter from the Chevalier, afterwards Viscount Mirabeau, to the Bailli, dated January 1st 1780.

the severity he was forced to assume. He therefore wrote to him on the 18th of July.

We do not transcribe his letter, because on the one hand the substance is given in Manuel's collection*; and on the other hand it had been, in some measure, re-written by Dupont, whose zeal and timid prudence may be appreciated from the following passage:—

"You will, I am convinced, feel the same uneasiness that I do with regard to the answers which the Count may have received, and the imprudences in which his haughty temper may involve him. He has, I confess, begun well; but it is on that very account that if difficulties arise, they must not alarm him. I wish he would write nothing without giving me an opportunity of advising him upon the propriety of his letter, and checking his impetuosity, which injures him to no purpose. You are attached to him, and I beseech you not to forward any of his letters, unless they breathe nothing but mildness †."

The Bailli continued to reply to Mirabeau:—

"I repeat that I have nothing personally to forgive you. I have forgiven your sister, as a Christian, as a religious man, and as hoping to be forgiven by the Supreme Being. But I can no longer answer for any thing. If the other parties interested pardon you,

* Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 345.

† Unpublished letter from Dupont de Nemours to M. Boucher, dated July 6th 1779.

I do not oppose it; but I shall not urge them to do so. I have, however, sounded your father about you; he has assured me he can do nothing for you, but that he has sincerely forgiven you the personal injuries you have done him, as they have injured nobody but yourself *."

Mirabeau stood the more in want of this favourable disposition, as he was far from meeting with them in other quarters. He had written to his father-in-law, who answered him very harshly.

" M. de Marignane's letter appears to me so heavy a blow for the poor young man, that before I let it fall upon his head, I could wish to find some method of softening it down, or applying a remedy †."

Mirabeau now caught still more eagerly at the hope which this paternal pardon seemed to hold out.

" Your letter has left me no other feeling than the desire of thanking you for the consolatory assurance that my father has forgiven me those of my faults which are personal to himself. It is certain, and I

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* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to Mirabeau, dated September 14th 1779.

† Unpublished letter from Dupont de Nemours to M. Boucher, dated September 14th 1779.

" The officious M. Boucher has sent Marignane's letter to Dupont, as he found it too harsh. I was not sorry that those protectors should read that sort of prose."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 16th* 1779.

eagerly repeat it, that with these happy tidings gladness has entered these fatal walls. My faults towards my father, caused by the delirium of a moment, and into which I was hurried by those who wished to ruin me through my errors, had made me conceive that he was placing faith in an accusation against me, unworthy of both of us. The faults I have committed against my father were and are the greatest weight upon my conscience. I do not think you will find that this is having no correct ideas of any thing. In this respect, at least, my head, which I in nowise excuse, is not turned, and my heart is honest, sincere, and certain in its repentance.

" Allow me to add to this, which is, and shall remain my profession of faith, a few reflections, submitted to your prudence, and addressed to your kindness.

" Whether my father can or will yet do something more for me, or whether he may not be willing, or think he is not willing to do so, his having been able and willing to forgive me is so great a point gained, that the remainder appears trifling in comparison.

" This remainder, nevertheless, is frightful. The activity of a madman, if you will, but who does not think himself incapable of doing well, and the workings of a heart, in the main noble and sincere, with as many faults to make amends for as I have, shut up between solid walls, within a space of six

feet square, is a dreadful thing. The most cruel of my torments is the certainty of not being able to take a single step, without suspicion of its being dictated by base or sordid motives. When strong feeling brings me to your feet, or those of my father, and prompts me to make those advances which I consider right, towards the Countess of Mirabeau and her father, I say to myself, 'they are at liberty not to believe you;' and, nevertheless, my heart says, 'you deserve to be believed: you advance nothing that you would not accomplish at the sacrifice of every drop of your blood.'

"It would certainly be the Countess of Mirabeau's real interest to come to my aid. It would redound greatly to her honour, and prove to me a more powerful bond than the captivity in which I am now held. I dare not hope she will act thus. Would it not be worthy of my father's generosity not to grant me a sterile pardon alone, but to put me in a situation to deserve it? Such a thing would afford him an opportunity of enjoying yet a few happy moments, and to procure them for him, I would devote every energy of my being. I cannot doubt that he will show this generosity, which would yield him so much satisfaction.

"It would be in accordance with the character of the best of uncles, of him who certainly has done a hundred times more for his nephews than they had a right to expect—it would be in accordance, I say, with his

unalterable and noble goodness, not to desert an unfortunate nephew, who feels towards him the most deserved and affectionate attachment, and is most eager to justify his favour. Yet he has written to me, that he will do nothing for me. I know you well, my dear uncle, and will not believe that this sentence is definitive.

"I must, undoubtedly, suffer for my faults, but I beseech you to tell me that you do not impute to me those of my sister *. Your justice must grant me thus much. This point settled, and I am certain you cannot in equity refuse to do it, I will not ask you to answer for me, but only make bold to request you to try me once more, and not condemn to death and oblivion the eldest of your house. Would it not be possible, under the same despotism that keeps me here, and on condition of returning hither, if you felt the least discontented with my arrangements or my conduct, for me to pass a few months with you at Mirabeau? How much I should have to say to you, which, perhaps, would make you judge me with a little more indulgence! Oh! how anxious I am to deserve your good will, and in the absence of that, I would content myself with your pity †!"

These supplications touched and embarrassed the Bailli.

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* Madame de Cabris.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to the Bailli, dated October 30th 1779.

"You would oblige me very much by dictating to me the substance of the answer I am to make him, for you know that I must remain neuter. I must, however, tell you, for the discharge of my conscience, that were you certain of again catching the bird, if, after having left his cage, he deserved to return to it, and there was a government which, in this general darkness, studded with glow-worms, did not think it beneath them to enter into the wants of noble families;—finally, if the trial he asks to undergo with me was practicable, I would consent to it—and why should I not own it?—most willingly *."

Similar feelings of indulgence had not yet taken possession of the Marquis.

"Boyer † has sent me the letter written to you by this madman. I have also seen one from him, in which he says, that the person he most loves and respects is his uncle. In that same letter, he calls you the 'Baron of Feudality.' He also follows up his design, for he writes to me long and far-fetched stories respecting this extraordinary pardon, and makes a great display of it. I do not think he is laying a snare for you, but only that he likes to touch upon this chord, because it is the one which affects his pride the least. I have also seen his letters to his wife and

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated October 30th 1779.

† Boyer, the administrator of the estates in trust, at Aix.

to Marignane. Both, in my opinion, are deserving only of contempt. He is, in every thing, a madman by nature. He is raging with impudence and pride. In truth, I will lend my hand to nothing but a decided demand from his wife, because she alone has a right to make it. I would rather cut off both my hands than engage her to do it; and she would be mad if she acted otherwise than in concert with her father *."

Mirabeau, encouraged by the Bailli's kindness, without being disheartened by the frequent bitterness of his letters, continued to write to him.

"I feel that by my errors I have but too much impaired your happiness; and if they furnish the opportunity of a just repentance, they also afford me the pleasure of thinking that you have not, altogether, discarded all interest in my behalf, although you do not think proper to do any thing for me. But I am wrong: you have done much more than I had

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 26th 1779. If the Marquis is accused, it will not be of inconsistency this time; for shortly after he thus wrote to the Marquis of Marignane:—

"His wife would always have a right to ask it, but I should be the first to judge her worthy of being interdicted, if she did so without her father's consent."—*Letter dated April 24th 1780, inserted in the Case for the Countess of Mirabeau*, &c., p. 34.

The Marquis of Marignane made no scruple of following this advice, for it was he alone who, through obstinate selfishness, prevented, four years subsequently, the husband and wife from again living together.

any right to expect, when you consented to answer my letters. Accept my best wishes on the renewal of the year; whatever may be my fate, until the end of my melancholy career, may the recollection of me never weary you, and may it leave to your venerable old age, all that peace of mind you have so well deserved, by a life devoted to the exercise of every virtue *."

This letter, like every other, was read by the Marquis, who thus expressed himself on the subject:—

" It appears to me, that as you had just written to him, the compliments of the new year were not required, and that this regularity of his, in returning letter for letter, of which he already makes a boast, is useless, the more so as, in consequence of his ill-formed mind, it gives him the greatest hopes. You ought not, in my opinion, to honour him with a regular correspondence. I think the wishes for a new year, ought to be understood. Mind, the Count mistakes compliments for mere words, and he understands your expression relative to my pardon as an absolution. Absolution! be it so; but penitence is indispensible. You have told him the precise point, and, on my part, I have informed him, without reserve, that henceforward, he can be nothing but through his wife; the more so, because this is more than true. Finding

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 15th 1779.

his pride and his heart more perverse than ever, I devote him to the kindness of the police, of which he disposes. I consider him incurable, and will never more interfere with him *."

A passage in this letter relates to a subject which we have hitherto left unnoticed, although it is frequently mentioned in the correspondence from Vincennes. We allude to Mirabeau's physical sufferings. His sight was much impaired, in consequence of his excessive and continual labours, which nevertheless constituted the whole pursuits of the prisoner's life, the solace of his captivity, and his resource in distress; but his constitution was giving way, on account of its very strength, and for want of exercise. We shall dwell only a moment on this subject, to show the severe treatment he was then enduring.

" M. Lenoir informs me, by this last post, that the wild fellow, ' has suffered the greatest agony, for some days past, has voided blood with his urine, and the physician, who attends him, apprehends it to be symptoms of the stone.' But I have not forgotten his old tricks to excite pity, his other pranks, and his baths, for which you were silly enough to pity him, although the whole was assumed. My business is to keep him secure, in the first place, and to think of other things

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 1st 1780.

afterwards*. If the Count chooses to let out all the blood in his veins, he will lose nothing by it; and even though he had the stone, of which, let the doctor say what he will, this is no symptom, the stone is very usually cut out with closed doors. It will have no effect on his confinement.

" I have told you before, that during the summer of 1778, in the months of July and August, I received a bill for baths and cooling medicines, prescribed by the physician, and attested both by the fellow himself and the commandant. Nothing was omitted. I took no notice of the bill, and returned no answer. Last winter brought me a second appeal from the king's lieutenant, who even threatened to continue his remonstrances. I paid no more attention to this. Lastly came a letter from the minister, announcing 'stone and catarrh,' and telling me that I certainly could not mean to let him die without relief; and that the king's orders must be attended to. Covered with scars as I was, and not easily intimidated—looking on such admonitions to a man of influence and years as the warning of a starling offered to an elephant, I submitted to inquire into the matter. I was told that it was the result of an arrangement between M. de Maurepas,

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 22nd 1778.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated July 31st 1778.

M. Amelot, and M. Lenoir. I replied, like a man conscious of his importance, that the two latter were too young to teach me; and that the former had known long enough that I was a man not likely to forget my duty *."

Let us now return to the place which this incidental narrative induced us to quit for an instant. The correspondence before us shows us that, although the Bailli did not flatly oppose his brother, he continued to reply to Mirabeau's letters.

"I cannot exactly guess what expressions in my former letters have so much flattered your hopes regarding the forgiveness which your father grants you, with reference to what concerns him personally. But assuming this pardon to be unconditional, what can he do for you? Assuming even that of the families you have injured, your wife cannot assist you. I tell you, besides, with all the sincerity you know I possess, that your letters to her, as well as those

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* Unpublished letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 1st 1780. Some time previously he had written:—

"They have driven me to make the profession of faith with which I have armed myself since they began teazing me on this subject. According to my method, which has served me against every other, and which is to have none at all, I told the truth."—*Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Marignane, dated April 24th 1789. Case for the Countess of Mirabeau*, &c., p. 36.

to your father-in-law, exhibit the same pride that ruined you. Have you not been convicted of a crime which the king, at his coronation, made oath never to pardon, and for which the courts of justice would not register a pardon, even if the king were disposed to mercy? Have you not been condemned to pay enormous damages to persons who cannot relax without sacrificing every thing, since evidence exists in the fruit of your guilty passion? Are you not weighed to the earth with debts? With all these circumstances before me, could I, if I would, at my age, and with all my infirmities, go and bury myself in a castle, that I might witness your conversion? How can you atone for what you choose to call your errors, but what others term your crimes? The trial you solicit is utterly impossible. Your haughty spirit urges you to call that hand despotic which has warded off the public vengeance; but that friendly hand may grow weary, and not always hearken to the prayers of a family: so that if I were to interfere, I should be accountable for whatever might happen *."

Mirabeau was not slow in answering this letter, and we transcribe part of his reply.

" My very dear Uncle,

" If I did not look upon you as possessing the

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to Mirabeau, dated December 14th, 1779.

greatest virtue, the soundest judgment, and the most incorruptible equity of any man I ever met, I should resign myself to my fate (for I am not much in the habit of bargaining for life, and I think the close of mine not very far off), and make no reply to the letter you did me the honour to write on the 14th of this month. But I have a thousand things to say in reply to that letter, since you will read mine.

"I shall therefore make bold to unfold my thoughts and feelings with the greatest sincerity; and I have such faith in your goodness, that I doubt not you will deign to read attentively what I write, correct me when I am wrong, and not deny me a little indulgence in return for my confidence and candour.

"Your letter of the 24th of September acquainted me, dear uncle, with 'my father's forgiveness for my personal wrongs to himself.' As these wrongs are the heaviest I have committed, and the only ones, too, which inspire me with acute remorse, whilst my other faults, for reasons you shall know hereafter, make me feel nothing worse than bitter repentance, this happy news relieved me from a heavy load;—not because I forgive myself, or see the pledge of my safety in this forgiveness; but truly because, whether at liberty or in confinement, in health or in sickness, it was an awful thing to say to myself, 'thy father hates thee.' This was the most painful of my fears, the most afflicting of my misfortunes: yet my fears are not removed

although I am relieved. After this explanation, permit me now to turn to other matters in your letter.

"First, my dear uncle, I must tell you freely, that in a country where there is no constitution, no adequate law, and where society is truly in a state of warfare, the majority of positive laws that exist, inspire me with contempt. A man may become very wicked before they have authority to punish him; he may be perfectly good, and yet have broken several, and perhaps even pride himself on having trampled upon a few. I do not pretend to be right, but this is my firm belief; and so long as my conscience and the laws of nature lay no sin to my charge, I confess to you that the actual law will never make me feel either remorse or fear.

"But perhaps you will put this question to me: 'Is your conscience so easily quieted on the subject of the abduction?' I do not pretend to say that it is, uncle: I might, if I were not afraid of tiring you, examine whether there has been any abduction proved against me; and if the abduction be indeed proved, whether it is as bad as abductions are in general. I might send you the pathetic and stirring letter which drove me three times across the Alps, made me risk my life twenty times, and plunge at last headforemost into the gulf, and then ask you—'am I an infamous seducer, or rather a generous man, who, feeling that he had engaged his faith too seriously, but likewise that such engagement once formed, he was absolutely bound to her whom he had in some sort prejudiced, and whose

life was in danger, desired above all to serve the lady he had injured, when, under the dagger's point, she called to him for protection?'

"But this is said solely in reply to your remark—'the crime which the king swore at his coronation never to forgive!' He took the same oath with regard to duels; and yet, though you heartily despise a duellist, you will not surely conclude that a good man should never fight. You know, as well as I do, that the crimes which found no favour at the coronation, and were judged unworthy of reprieve at the council-board *, were duelling, highway robbery, high treason both human and divine, poisoning, coining, abduction, rape, incendiarism, murder; lastly, desertion, imprisonment for fines payable to the king, smuggling of salt, and every other kind of smuggling perpetrated by bands.

"Thus we see smugglers of salt, and other smugglers, prisoners for fines, and deserters, assimilated to murderers, incendiaries, and those guilty of treason to kings! (As for those guilty of treason to God, I do not know who they are, and it irritates me when I hear people speak of avenging God, and attribute to him our notions and passions.)

"Since people may be hanged and broken upon the

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* This passage, from the words "the crimes which found no favour" to "our notions and passions," appears in a note by Mirabeau, at the end of the fifth chapter of the "Lettres de Cachet," vol. i. p. 101.

wheel for the crime of coining, it clearly appears that the king has the double power: first, to create crimes, and then to punish the crimes he has created, by the most frightful torture, as much so as if the most abominable violation of the laws of nature had been committed;—that, therefore, by the most despotic means, I would say the most extravagant, were the subject less hateful, the king is at liberty to waive all proportion between the punishment and the injury *. But does it not follow of course that such a sovereign must needs possess the privilege of pardoning, that heavenly right which he shares only with his Maker, and with which it is proper to intrust him to its fullest extent, on account of our barbarous laws. Without it, every abolishment of a crime, every reprieve from a penalty, would pass for an injustice towards mankind; and there would be but little distinction between him who commits murder against the laws, and him who saves a life in spite of them †.

"Be that as it may, the privilege of pardoning is unbounded, as well it may be in so absolute a monarchy as ours; and since you mention the coronation oath, with which we both know his majesty sometimes dis-

* This part of the paragraph, from the words "it clearly appears that the king," &c., was borrowed, or repeated by Mirabeau in his "Lettres de Cachet," vol. i. p. 80.

† The same remark is applicable to this sentence, from the words "that heavenly right," &c. "Lettres de Cachet," vol. i. p. 352.

penses, allow me to say, that it is only on those occasions when he desires to show clemency, that he has laid claim to the exercise of an arbitrary will. He has sworn that on every other occasion he will respect, and cause to be respected, the laws which the basest of men can violate as well as he (salvo condigno misericordiæ respectu). Thus it is evident that the seducer should be pardoned as well as the duellist, when there are mitigating circumstances; and, therefore, there is no shame in claiming such a favour for a son, a nephew, or a brother.

"I speak of all these matters, dear uncle, in a positive tone, because what I say does not appear to me doubtful. Believe, however, that I am very willing to bow to your more enlightened judgment. Yet I can assure you, that since I have been in prison, I have discussed the point with men in office, lawyers, &c. Not one of these had any doubt that my father could obtain my pardon the moment he asked for it. I may even say that my opponents know it well enough; that M. de Valdahon trembles at it, and expects it; that Madame de Ruffey wishes it, in order to negociate for her daughter with greater advantage.

"But, uncle, when reasoning with you, who of all men I have ever seen, alone remind me of Plutarch's heroes, I will not stop to discuss propriety, but appeal at once to common right, the unsuspected judge of every upright man, who, like

yourself, exclaims as he begins each day, 'let us go where duty leads;' and I shall first define what I mean by despotism.

"It is that tyrannical justice which puts the will of one man in the room of the law's decrees; which makes the life or fortune of a citizen depend upon a surprise or a mistake; whose blows are the more terrible from being often silent and unseen; which lets the wretch feel the shaft that pierces him, but not the hand whence it sped; or which, after severing him from the universe, and condemning him to live that he may die a thousand times, leaves him to the pressure of his fetters, far removed from freedom, the venerable image of which is for ever veiled from his sight, and far removed from the power of the law, which, both in prison and in banishment, ought always to obey the call of the wretch by whom it is invoked.

"Shall I give you another definition of the despotism under which I suffer, and which I openly abhor? I would call it, with 'the Friend of Men' (in 12, vol. vi. page 72), an attribution which, though it were given to justice herself, would degenerate into tyranny, unless she recoiled from it with loathing, and refused to accept it.

"According to this definition, I forget for a moment my good fortune in having received my father's forgiveness for the wrongs personal to himself, and that consistently with gratitude, I cannot appeal to the

courts of justice. The following is pretty nearly the kind of defence I should make before your tribunal."

Here we break off our extract, and suppress the eloquent address which this last sentence ushers in, because the whole is partly contained in the "Lettres de Cachet," and altogether in the Vincennes collection *.

"My dear uncle, I do not know what you may think of this language, not at all like that of a courtier, but rather resembling that of one of your own kindred, who was born free, and does not forget it in a place where every thing says to him, 'you are no longer so;' who is acquainted with both the laws of nature and the laws of society, and will never succumb to either grief or adversity. I say I do not know what you may think of it; but I hope it will not appear offensive to you, any more than I intend it. Are you not the only one I appeal to, you who owe me nothing? Is not that sufficient to prove to you that I look upon you, in spite of your denials, as my tutelary genius, if one there be who can yet save me?

"You accuse me of pride. I am too near myself to be my own judge; but does it surprise you that my misfortunes should make me so? M. de Marignane wrote to me insultingly; I sent him a respectful reply.

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* Lettres de Cachet, vol. i. p. 355; and Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. pp. 258—260, 416—420.

Was I to kiss the foot that was trampling upon me, and thus lead people to suppose that I would take liberty at any price?—that I would accept my life upon such terms? His daughter!—she ought to think my letters temperate. I never defamed her, as some have asserted; I respect myself too much to do so. The garbled and altered statement to which people appeal was not written by me; she knows it well. She knows too, and ought to be deeply sensible of it, that, with all my faults, I am not wanting in generosity. We will not, however, speak of her; were I to defend myself on this point, I should have too much the advantage of her. I sincerely repent of my faults; and my repentance will not allow me to recriminate —far otherwise. Let people learn to be just, and I shall receive much greater indulgence than I do at present.

"As for you, my dear uncle, who, let me say it again, owed me nothing, you were the first deigned to write to me, whilst every one else, without a single exception, refused even to give me tidings of my poor child, of whose death I was informed by a stranger. Whatever you may do for me, you shall have my last prayer. I am here, dwelling in an abode of sorrow, which is destroying me by inches, and will inevitably kill me. I am in torture from a serious attack of gravel; whilst cataract, impossible to prevent in this

everlasting solitude, where my only consolation lies in study, threatens to deprive me of sight. Grief and time, with enervating hands, are undermining my health, already too much impaired in every respect by the impetuosity of youth. But let me at once die unpitied, if I regret any thing so bitterly as the hopelessness of eradicating from your memory, and my father's, the recollection of my long errors. Call them madness, call them crimes, if you will—you are free to do so; I shall not venture to defend myself against you;—still this truth remains—that no repentance was ever more sincere than mine, no resolution of amendment more firm. But you will not grant me a trial; you will not even extend to me that pity felt even by an Asiatic tyrant who wrote to Alexander: 'Zizim cannot live buried in a dungeon; he only languishes, and is more than half dead. It would be an act of mercy to kill him at once, and send him to the regions of eternal peace.' I was vain enough to think myself not altogether undeserving of a better fate. If this is pride, pray forgive it. I am willing to humble myself before my father, whom I have offended. He is my father, and I love him. I will also humble myself before you, to whom I owe the tenderest and most respectful affection. But never will I do so before persons as much beneath me in principle, as it has pleased fate and fortune to place them in reality

above me. Let them forgive me as I forgive them, and I will thank them for it; let them do me good, and I will acknowledge it with all my soul, and all my strength. But so long as they persist in loading me with insults as a return for my civility and submission, I shall say to myself, 'thou art better than they are; for never hast thou repulsed or insulted the unfortunate; die, then, if it must be so, but heed them not!'

"Such, dear uncle, is my profession of faith, which I could defend and account for by many circumstances and proofs. But already have I sufficiently fatigued you with this long and tedious letter. I shall end it with a prayer, that you do not believe me capable of calumniating my uncle and benefactor, since you condescend to answer me and give your reasons for your conduct; and that, in future, you will drop those formula which wound my heart, and most bitterly aggravate the sense of my sufferings, such as: 'Monsieur le Comte, I am your very humble servant, &c.'

"It is not with such involuntarily bitter irony that you ought to write to an unfortunate nephew, who loves and reveres you, and would yield his life to persuade you of feelings which truly and strongly dwell in his heart. I entreat you again to be fully persuaded that, if in this letter I have taken the liberty to discuss my rights, which I only share with all mankind, I am still willing to acknowledge myself deprived of them, so long as it may please my father to

have it so, and that I abjure for ever all thoughts of litigation, which I have ever abhorred, whether past, present, or future *."

Does the reader wish to know what effect this letter produced on the father, whom so much eloquence should have moved, so much misery have appeased?

"As for that mad-brained fellow at Vincennes, all he says is nothing more than the philosophical prating of the great *perhaps*, the Phœbus of bad characters, an impudent recollection †. Three or four madmen like Diderot, D'Alembert, Rousseau ‡, and other

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to the Bailli, dated December 25th 1779. In reference to this letter, Mirabeau wrote to Boucher, the same day:—

"I send you a letter which does not displease me; if you view it in the same light that I do, I beg you will forward it to Dupont by the earliest opportunity. I have not written after his fashion; I have followed the impulse of my heart, and you may depend upon it my uncle will be moved. I do not know how I have found strength to write it. I did not close my eyes the whole night; and my sufferings are greater than they have hitherto been. Ah! my friend! I have, and ought to have, but little love of life."

About this same letter Mirabeau wrote to Sophie:—

"I am sorry I cannot send you my answer: it is noble, tender, and full of truths; but, as it fills four closely written pages, as I was unwell when I wrote it, as I wanted to send it off immediately, and as I grow blinder every day, I could not keep a copy."—*Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes*, vol. iv. p. 120.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 1st 1780.

‡ We think it rather curious to compare this opinion of the Marquis of Mirabeau on J. J. Rousseau, with what he said of that great writer at the period of his death.

worthless fellows, dressed in tinsel, with a jumble of books fit for the tower of Babel, and most of whom have nothing of their own but impudence, have been the storehouse of all our new philosophical trash,

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" I thank you, my dear Perreau *, for the account you have sent me. This was truly a man of talent and genius, and in him we have lost the most harmonious writer in our language, He was for heated minds and weak understandings what Massillon was for the wise, and Voltaire for the wicked and insane. The age is beginning to cast off whatever is beyond the reach of the vulgar. What a pity that a mind so transcendent and noble as that of Rousseau should have made so little use of its power, for his own good, and that of his fellow-creatures! Because in sooth he must turn philosopher, walk upon his head, and be his own prop! Let us compare, in point of result, the balm of Richardson with the sharp, pungent salt of Rousseau: the one perfumes you with the scent of real and practical virtue, the other inflames you with the heat of an imaginary virtue, fantastic, passionate, uneasy, wavering, which agitates everything, and settles nothing. Rousseau, such as we have seen him, possessed some rare virtues; but, hurried away to the inevitable rock which must prove the destruction of every man vain enough to be his own guide, he could not escape from pride, the hollowness of the world, and the fulness of self. I will tell you concerning his death a thought I should take care not to publish. His early resolution to leave off writing, for fear of becoming inferior to himself, shows a mind in love with celebrity. That man was weary of everything. His change of conduct to reconcile himself to his end, his premature and planned death, his theatrical speech, his notion of contrasting himself with that ugly

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* Jean-André Perreau, author of several excellent works, afterwards teacher of the law, a tribune, a joint framer of the civil code, inspector-general of the law colleges, &c. A very striking resemblance to the Marquis of Mirabeau caused him to pass for his natural son, having been born at his house, April 17th 1749. He died at Toulouse, July 6th 1813.

which ought never to be tolerated out of St. Lazare, or Charenton *. With regard to this one, when it is considered that he is almost one-and-thirty, good sense must judge him a fool. His letters prove him to be what I

Voltaire, to whose memory he is, in fact, at this very moment playing a sad trick, all show his love of notoriety. It is true that we have lost a writer remarkable for glow of thought and elegant and harmonious diction. I cherish, I honour his memory. He was most singularly gifted, and his gifts may have been a fatality to some weak understandings. His finest work is unfortunately tainted with immoral allusions; yet, in other respects it is inestimable, nay, edifying. I regret his loss deeply, and even now he renders me another service, by making me feel more intensely a great truth which I have always fondled (perhaps I needed so to do)—that man is never so much himself as when he feels his own littleness; when he discovers his origin in the views of his Creator; when he submits his conduct to those views, and to them likewise refers his fate. Remember, my dear Perreau, that the spring of life is spent by virtuous minds which have emulation, in amassing knowledge; a sterile provision of no use whatever unless it is referred to the only true science, that of knowing, accepting, and submitting. Riper age passes off amid vain projects, and daily troubles, which do not teach us how to live, and leave but few traces of our existence. The third stage of life pursues us with its inseparable concomitant, conviction of error. We live in affliction, we die each day in fancy, we regret our past ideal life, and we find it too late to enjoy the life of reality. Such is all that man is capable of by himself, in spite of his studiousness, his labour, and his will, unless this will be constantly and assiduously submissive to that of the Supreme Being,—unless he is persuaded of his own wretchedness, but encouraged, sustained, and elevated by the title and sense of his celestial origin and future destiny."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to M. Perreau, dated July 10th 1778.*

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 28th 1780. Charenton and St. Lazare are madhouses.

have all my life considered him. His turn of mind leads him towards emptiness. He was born for bathos as a greyhound for coursing. He is puffed up with the expressions of dreamers and castle-builders, which he catches with natural talent, without mixing so much as one poor grain of sense with three pints of words. Moreover, he has a base inclination for natural, moral, and physical plagiarism, and no sooner does he attempt to follow one chain of ideas, than he is lost in a maze of sound, like soap bubbles in the air, a very proper simile for such trashy ratiocination, and he concludes like a simpleton run wild. Next comes his pride, vain-glory, and constant lying. After all, he is nothing but a dangerous madman, whose insolent presumption serves him for wit, his pride for high feelings, and his impetuosity for courage *. His last master-piece is the only one of which he has sent me no copy. I suppose he is tired of my not answering his letters; however he did send me a new year's despatch, wherein he continued to talk about 'misfortunes' and 'faults.' This is the style of the day on which he suffers most, and 'near the term when we lose all idea of wretchedness as well as of remorse.' You see that all this is quite orthodox, and very respectful, being addressed to me,

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 28th 1780.

although he knows my principles, and my abhorrence of all proclaimed opinions denying the immortality of the soul, which alone can act as a check upon human passions. But no matter: I allow him to round his fine periods, and presume you will not answer his logic. Turn we our eyes from this dung-hill, and let it be thrown out upon the highway*."

The Bailli, however, had already replied.

"I thank you for your good wishes and observations on the new year. The years which Providence may please to grant me would have been happy, as happy, at least, as those of an old man can be, after a life of activity and weariness, if it had pleased my nearest relation, after my brother, to make him happy; for my brother's happiness is mine. God has ordained it otherwise, and I bow to His decree.

"So far as I can judge, you have not well considered and appreciated the faults to which you plead guilty. And, to tell you the truth, you seem to me

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 23rd 1780. It appears that this angry effusion had been anticipated, for we know that Dupont de Nemours was absolutely dismayed by the last-mentioned letter of Mirabeau.

"Ah! sir, why allow him to write in this style to his uncle, and consequently to his father? I know them better than he does, and know better the language which ought to be addressed to them. I am very much afraid he has done himself great mischief."—*Unpublished letter from Dupont de Nemours to M. Boucher, dated January 10th* 1780.

more than ever blinded by self-love which clothes failings in the garb of virtue, and addicted to the common fault among wrong-heads, which, I repeat, is to have no just idea of any thing, a qualification that fits them for the cap of Midas. You appear to me stunned by the very noise of your own arguments.

" It really grieves me that you mistake the delirium of your imagination for philosophy. You complain of the government, but if it had forsaken you, what would you have done?

" I am far from entertaining of myself, and from thinking that you entertain, the opinion you profess respecting me. But I have lived in the world, and have always endeavoured to be just. I am anything but a courtier, or an instigator of despotism; but, having long observed the world and human nature, under many disguises, and in many lands—having studied them minutely and leisurely before I had attained an age through which time carries us like lightning, I have come to the same conclusion as yourself, that a man's conduct may be perfectly correct, and yet he may have reason to complain of the laws; that it may likewise be very incorrect, and yet he shall be protected by them. I have also witnessed certain laws of honour at variance with the actual laws of the land. But what inference can we draw from this? Nothing, save the weakness of human nature. Yet we cannot doubt that many of those who have laboured to im-

prove the actual laws were very intelligent legislat
and that almost all of them were actuated by the pu
welfare. It is therefore evident presumption, to c
sider yourself wiser than all other men. They co
not produce a perfect work; nor indeed can
himself: for to make any thing perfect, he must m
himself.

" You are perfectly right, when you say that ki
should possess the power of pardoning every cri
since you imagine they have the right of creati
crimes.

" Kings are men, and so far am I from taxing th
with the errors they fall into, that I am only as
nished they act so well as they do, considering
nonsense put into their royal heads, and that, w
no better faculties than ordinary men, they
encompassed with snares. As men, and weak m
they may have erred by treating as criminal, some a
which were not really so; and to confound a smugg
with an assassin is to overturn our usual notio
But are they really confounded by the nature of t
penalty? Are they so by the aid which, in ca
of murder, is afforded to the police, and in oth
cases is withheld?

" The wants of society have made it urgent that t
king, whether officiating in person as a ruler, or havi
some one appointed to rule in his name, should possess t
means of satisfying all the exigencies of this same socie

The mode of effecting this may be misunderstood: if so, let us attribute it to human imperfection; but when the law is once established, that man who knowingly exposes himself to a degrading punishment, even when wrongly inflicted, is something very like a scoundrel.

"You talk of natural law: but those who invoke this law, forget that, according to their own meaning, none but wild beasts have a right to appeal to it; and this right belongs to the latter, as owing nothing but to nature. Taking, however, the true sense of the matter, every human law is but an interpretation of this great law of nature.

"You invoke the natural law! Well! what is its decree? 'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.' Now examine yourself, and tell me whether you should like to be done unto, as you have done unto others.

"I cannot answer all your arguments. But you have shown me, without intending it, that you only feel your faults in their effect, and not in their cause.

"I shall not notice that part of your letter between inverted commas *; but do not believe that I am unable to answer it. Your father is entitled to the chief rule over you. This at once is the first and most natural authority.

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* The allocation inserted in the Vincennes collection, vol. i. pp. 238, 259, 260, 416—420.

"With reference to your father-in-law, you ca that an insult, which was no more than a simp statement of your errors towards society. Examir yourself fairly, and say whether you ever spent man of your days of freedom without complaining, c giving cause of complaint to others? Had you ev a friend with whom you did not quarrel?

"But I am going too far, and I neither desir nor have any right to grieve you. As I can do yo no service, it is not fair to reproach you. I conclud by wishing most cordially, but with no hope whatevei that you may sincerely repent of, and acknowledg your errors. These are the feeling with which I am Monsieur le Comte, yours, etc.

"P. S.—Your correspondence with me cannot appea so agreeable to you as to make you wish to carry it on Do not then tire your eyes by writing to me, sinc I can do nothing for you *."

Whatever the Bailli might say, he did not in hi heart wish to drop a correspondence which wa paving the way for his nephew's release. The latte immediately replied:—

"My dear uncle, you deceive yourself: harsh a they are, there is a latent sweetness in your letters which serves to console me in spite of their gloom Do not deprive me of this comfort.

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to Mirabeau, dated January 10th 1780.

"Is it nothing in my situation to have a friend in the wide world who does not forsake me—to see an upright, good, and sensible man thinking of me, giving me his advice, and lecturing me?—an uncle, who has shown me the tenderness of a father, who has both wished and done me good; who is dearer and more estimable to me than I have words to express?

"I can detect his kindly feelings even through his sternness of expression. If he thought his remonstrances vain, he would not write to me. No, uncle! —a man is not dead so long as he can feel, and think; and he that is not dead, may atone and deserve forgiveness. Heaven keeps open for man, up to the last moment of his life, a road to indulgence and reward. Shall men presume to be more severe than their Maker?—and is there no way to their hearts? Alas! —who is he that needs no indulgence? This is the finest moral in the Lord's Prayer.

"I am forced to defend myself on some points, because I am guilty enough in others to require that my faults should not be aggravated. But were they even more grievous, would they be inexpiable in the eyes of my family, my supporters, and my kinsmen, when they are pardonable before God? I trust He will save my soul. But is it determined that my body shall die—that body which is the only property of mine in the power of man? Will your

goodness deliver the verdict? And if you, who certainly do not want firmness nor rigid justice, dare not deliver it, ought you not to wish, generous uncle, that it should not be delivered by any one, and that means of escape should be afforded me? Ought you not to help me to such means? Pent up within these vaults, I can see but dimly. But ought not those who see more clearly, to extend a hand to direct my steps, and second my most earnest wish to recover the good opinion of the world? Sincere repentance is always entitled to forgiveness; and every resolution to do right deserves aid. Shall the one be granted to me without the other? When I exclaim, 'save me, I am ready to do all that is desired of me to merit the favour:' shall they reply, '*die?*' You will not. You will surely consider it a sort of duty to obtain for me a very different reply.

"What must I do? I know not. Let it be pointed out to me, and I will do it. I am inured to suffering, and fear no struggle. When we want to make a purchase, we demand the price. What do I want to purchase? The advantage of being able to be virtuous, and to earn hereafter a full pardon. Let a price be fixed. It will then be my duty to endeavour to pay the sum, or surrender myself, if I become insolvent. But to bury me thus irretrievably and without proposing any terms, when I beg for them, would be too cruel.

"Pardon me, my dear uncle, I again entreat you. It

is the nature of an overflowing heart to act as I do; my heart is constantly repeating, how much it respects and loves you, how much it relies upon you. Enlighten it: be its guide. This heart, once so impetuous, has become tractable: it will obey the least motion of your hand, or my father's. Write to me, my good uncle, deign to write to me; and tell me what attempts to make. From the sea-shore we warn a shipwrecked sailor to cling to such a plank; if we can, we throw him a rope.

" Nothing can equal the tenderness, the reliance, and veneration with which I have the honour, etc *."

These letters, though they were invariably read by the Marquis of Mirabeau, did not appease him, as is manifest in the following sentence, written at this period:—

" This man has been created with a crooked mind. Formerly, when madmen spoke irrationally they were locked up, and there was an end of the matter; now they argue, people listen to their logic, then believe, and then set them free. He lives in these times, and they have completed his madness. I have adequate proofs that his heart, pride, and plans have not changed. He deserves confinement for his crimes; and something worse perhaps, at least a worse prison

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* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to the Bailli, dated January 19th 1780.

than his present place of confinement. There is no other way of keeping such a bird fast *. I told the king's lieutenant at Vincennes that any mitigation or indulgence would be contrary to my wish †, and that I knew of no adequate security but four walls, and would not therefore agree to any mitigation whatever ‡.

At the same time he was framing a severe answer to his brother, who had asked for it in these words:—

"I beg you to tell me in brief what you would have me reply to the letter from Vincennes, which, I must confess, appears to me less arrogant than those which preceded it. But you are the right person to decide in this matter, and to give us all whatever directions you think proper §."

Here follows an extract from the letter written by the Bailli to his nephew:—

"Although this letter does not bear the same stamp of pride as your others, I am very far from seeing or believing you to be in that frame of mind which I could wish. You expect me to forget

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 4th 1780.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated March 16th 1780.

‡ Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Marignane, dated April 24th 1780. "Case for Counsel's Opinion for the Countess of Mirabeau," &c., p. 37.

§ Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 3rd 1780.

that instead of proving the pride and support of your father's age and mine, you have inflicted upon us every kind of sorrow. I cannot forget that you have the power of assuming any tone you like; and that at the very same moment you contemplate some atrocious act, you utter the most honeyed accents. Such a system may succeed for once in duping an honest heart, but age has experience to guard it, and cannot be often deceived, nor for any length of time.

" To seek to move the heart is the business of the stage; but in actual life, you must persuade; and there is no persuasion except in truth, justice, and reason.

" Since you consider yourself able to make amends for your crimes, excuse the word, for it best represents what you term 'your errors' and 'your faults,' it is evident that you do not feel their enormity. Dismiss all idea of 'making amends.' That is not in the power of man. God may pardon you, so may your father; but do not hope to regain public esteem, unless by a totally different course of life—one that shall be humble, retired, submissive, unassuming, and contented. In one of your letters you extol the natural law. What privileges does it give you?—those of a wild beast. The social law, against which you rail, is the only one which confers any rights upon you. These indeed are connected with duties; but the man who neglects his duties, ought to lose his rights. Yet it is upon the

latter alone that you found your pride. Take away this social law, and what common porter has not more rights than you have? You unhappily possess talent; and it is very possible that your pride is supported by that kind of superiority which you think you have over many others. But of what avail is superior talent, when it is not joined to correct understanding? Though it expresses all, relates all, and writes all on sand and air, it nevertheless conducts the heart, or suffers it to be led, into every vice, the body into every kind of licentiousness. Besides, do you think you have no equal, no superior? If there had never been men of genius before you came into the world, what would you be?

"Finally, if my letter offends you, I am sorry for it, but I must write as conscience dictates. Your father has expressed his opinion publicly and plainly upon this subject. Your wife is the only person who has a right to demand your freedom. You affect not to fear impediments. Well, then, I have most sincerely pointed out your road *."

The Marquis either was, or pretended to be, more than ever determined not to break, or even loosen, the fetters of his prisoner, without a formal application from the Countess.

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to Mirabeau, dated March 21st 1780.

" Rely upon it, if there is any mode of taming this haughty temper of his, it is by humiliation. As surely as the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, so surely humiliation is the beginning of that victory which we obtain over ourselves. The prodigal son returned home, but not till after he had tended swine. Rely upon it there is no deeper humiliation for him than to be reduced to kneel to his wife, implore her forgiveness, and confess he owes every thing to her. This is the point to which we must bring him. He has hitherto made but small advance towards it; but let us wait. If his pride should kill him, never mind. He must do this or nothing*."

Mirabeau, meanwhile, occasionally faltered in the resolution he had taken to await from his family alone, a pardon so obstinately refused. A hundred passages in the Vincennes correspondence prove that he complained often and bitterly, and not always unjustly, of the negociator Dupont. It must be acknowledged that the latter acted zealously and with devotedness; but his task was delicate and arduous. It is likewise true that, towards a client naturally so impatient as the prisoner, Dupont proved too lukewarm, tardy, and dogged; too self-important, too willing to act the cautious diplomatist, too ready to

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 15th 1780.

condemn Mirabeau in every case, and proclaim the equity of his father, to whom Dupont was attached by sincere affection, still more by the recollection of former services, and above all by that overweening dignity by which this haughty and determined man subjugated every one who approached him. Nor was Dupont acquainted with the worst of his designs.

For this reason Mirabeau sometimes entertained a thought of discontinuing his attempts at conciliation, and compelling his father to do him justice.

" I do not promise you that I shall never attempt to bring my father into a court of justice, and there I may perhaps succeed. I will not die in this place like a madman *. They wish to keep me here until the day of judgment; and I am determined to take any steps for my liberty, except positive escape †. I therefore, very earnestly demand to be put into the hands, either of the ordinary judges, or of special commissioners, provided M. Lenoir be one of them, in order that my case, having been prepared and tried, I may come at last to know the reason of my seven years' captivity. This, let me warn you, is not empty passion, but a

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 177.

† It is, indeed, deserving of remark, that Mirabeau, who, to be liberated from the Donjon of Vincennes, displayed so much perseverance, vigour, and that insinuating but lofty address which belonged to his character, and was worthy of it, never once conceived a project of escape, which would have been too mean a course for such a man.

firm and unchangeable resolution. I will not, must not be trifled with; and I shall confound them most deplorably, when I begin *."

Some days previously, Mirabeau had complained of having been too long deprived of Sophie's letters.

"It is six weeks since I received one, and before this, you used to send me two letters a month. If the foolish woman has written me any thing improper, send back her letter, or tell me the part to which you think I ought not to reply; but do not leave me in such dreadful suspense †."

It seems that the delay in the delivery of these letters, arose from an impediment caused by the child of the two captives. Sophie desired either to have her child with her, or else to place it at a school of her own selection. Madame de Ruffey resisted this wish with all her might; and the government sided

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* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated May 7th 1780. See likewise Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 198 and the following. Besides the preceding quotations, the following passage, in a letter written two years after, leads us to suspect that the attempt meditated by Mirabeau would not have proved unsuccessful.

"Depend upon it that Honoré was on the eve of procuring his enlargement without our interference."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June* 27th 1782.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated May 1st 1781.

with her. Boucher applied to Mirabeau for his intercession with Sophie, and he refused.

"I beg leave," he wrote, "to decline urging Sophie to do any such thing; because it is no part of my system to advise people against my own opinion; and because my own opinion is too strong to be explained to her by you, who have certain proprieties to respect, and certain duties to fulfil. I think, for my own part, that Sophie has but one plan to adopt, which is to go to law with her family, if she does not obtain satisfaction concerning her daughter. It would be iniquitous to thwart her wishes in this respect; and it is sometimes practicable to prevail over iniquity. You cannot yourself but feel that the excuse put forth by the family is weak and insincere; for they must of necessity know of the existence of this child. However, I will keep your secret, because I am bound to do in that respect what you wish. But I confess to you, that Sophie's letter, which I have just received, is full of good sense and sound reasoning; there is no replying to it except by force, which she might elude, and even defeat. It would be a most atrocious measure to place her child anywhere against her consent and without her knowledge *."

* Unpublished letter, already quoted, by Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated May 7th 1780.

This spirited letter appears to have roused in some degree the usually mild temper of M. Boucher.

" There would be a vast field for contesting your theories; but they do not concern me. What truly does concern me, is your correspondence, and you oblige me to tell you that you have swerved from its principle. It was permitted only on condition that you should give and exchange news of each other, and nothing more. Now, although you promise not to give advice, you do give it, and it is followed. Madame de Monnier's family have witnessed her obstinacy on more than one occasion, and it is asserted that if you did not advise her she would certainly be more tractable. You may judge how deeply this assertion implicates you. I have not chosen, up to this time, to treat you with the usual rigour, which would justify me in detaining every letter in which you pass the stipulated line; and I beg of you, unless you wish to injure me, and have no desire to prolong your correspondence, to forget business in your letters, and let all your thoughts dwell upon friendship *."

The letters of this period show that the commandant, Rougemont, whom we take particular care not to mention so often as our documents and the corresponding dates of the Vincennes collection would

* Unpublished letter from M. Boucher to Mirabeau, dated May 12th 1780.

authorise our doing, made a great noise about a conversation that he had himself promoted between his sister-in-law and Mirabeau, and about some words uttered by the prisoner, through space, to a lady apparently living in the castle, and which caused her some subsequent annoyance. The particulars of this affair which have not been lost, are, we think, interesting; but not to interterrupt the course of our narrative, we state them in a note *.

* "The Countess of Spare mistook me for the Marquis of Bauveau, an evident proof that they seldom see me from such a distance, since she could not recognise me, well as she knows me. I answered her in simple negatives. M. de Rougemont knew this, and spoke out for once. I told him the real fact, which had been before related to him just as I stated it. He begged me never to speak to the Countess of Spare again. I promised the more willingly because she used to bring women to look at me as 'the curious animal,' and this offended me. Next day he wanted, without consulting me, to block up some windows which I did not open, but found opened; I opposed his wishes, and asked him whether he intended to prevent me from taking the air in the gallery, the walk which M. Lenoir has allowed me. He yielded, and there was an end of the matter. It is a fact, that after this I never again spoke to the Countess of Spare, and indeed to nobody but Madame de Ruault, all which he well knows. Yesterday, being the first fine day in spring, I went into the garden from seven till ten o'clock, and from two till the closing of the gate. M. de Rougemont, who knew nothing of this, or would not know it, perceiving some ladies, friends of the Countess of Spare, at the windows, took two fusileers and a serjeant, and went, thus escorted, to the house of that high-born dame. I was not aware of the circumstance, and what if I had? This morning he came to put on the buskin in my apartment; I answered him with moderation and good sense. Now, can you guess what I was about at the very time he was thinking of doing me a mischief (for

Notwithstanding the extent and minute details of this correspondence, we cannot discover any trace of the

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he told me he would complain to the minister)? I had heard that the Countess of Spare, very indignant at an insult which she calls 'public,' wrote to the minister to claim a 'public atonement,' and I hastened to apprise Madame de Rougemont that she might interpose. This is my ill-nature! Certainly I wanted to avoid anything unpleasant; for I really pity the mania of this poor man, and feel an interest for his family; I would therefore gladly have prevented the whole castle from enjoying his confusion."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated April 1st* 1780.

"I believe that this event has *made some noise.* When you put together, or leave together, a couple of madmen, who are capable of entering the house of a woman of quality with a posse of soldiers behind them, on pretence that they had spoken to a prisoner who had not been in the galleries the whole day, certainly that *ought to make a noise.* If there had been any men at the Countess of Spare's, they would probably have sallied forth, sword in hand, and attacked M. de Rougemont and his guard. Moreover, the Parliament would have taken it up; for you must know, gentlemen viziers and demi-viziers, gentleman gods and demi-gods, that you are not yet so absolute, in this our Turkey-land, as to conduct a guard of soldiers into a private dwelling-house without an express mandate from the king. But the fact is, that since this absurd piece of brutality I have not spoken to any one. I never spoke more than three times to the Countess of Spare. I never pledge my word except on serious occasions, and shall always consider it both a duty and a pleasure to submit to you."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated May 7th* 1780.

Boucher wrote to the prisoner, June 8th 1780:—

"They tell me for certain that you have spoken to Madame de Ruault, and your conversation itself is repeated. You must know full well how contrary all this is to discipline, and that the consequences might be dangerous."

This accusation did not remain unnoticed; besides Mirabeau had written his answer beforehand.

pretended intimacies which Mirabeau is said to have formed at Vincennes with women who either resided in the castle, or visited there. Among these, as it has been basely asserted, was one of the first, most illustrious, and most innocent victims of the revolution. We give the lie with earnest conviction to these gratuitous and barefaced calumnies, leaving the blame and opprobrium

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"About a month ago Madame de Ruault, sister-in-law to M. de Rougemont, complimented me on the beauty of my voice and my manner of singing I acknowledged her kindness, as in duty bound. Shortly after she thought proper to intermingle a few sounds; this led to conversations on trifling matters, with a person who could not be suspected by M. de Rougemont; and he said nothing on the subject."—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated April 1st* 1779.

Mirabeau afterwards made a more pointed reply to this letter from Boucher:—

"Do you know who Madame de Ruault is? M. de Rougemont's sister-in-law: and it was at his own request that I once spoke to her. Such is the occasion seized by this most false, most base, and most wicked of men, to accuse me of having spoken; and that too at the very moment he had come to entreat me, in the presence of Vallage, not to despatch a letter of complaint to M. Lenoir, which this same Vallage had heard me read. My friend, this man puts me in a passion; I told him long ago that I neither did, nor would acknowledge in him any power over me; and by Heavens! I'll tell him so again, and make him feel it before the king's commissioner. This insolent mountebank said to me, with eyes swimming in tears—'My dear Count, let me owe you the obligation of reconciling me to my family;' and he now states—'he has spoken to my sister-in-law!' Ah! my dear friend, study people, and do not weigh my testimony against that of a man whom you cannot esteem!"—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated June 9th* 1780.

which they excite to the writers who have published them to the world, and are assuredly guilty, some of credulous levity, and others of foul and wilful slander. These tales, as atrocious as they are absurd, are without the slightest foundation, whether they relate to the period of Mirabeau's detention in the Donjon, where his rigorous confinement allowed neither egress or ingress, or whether they refer to a time posterior to his enlargement, and are supposed to have taken place within the castle; for the truth is Mirabeau remained there but a fortnight at most *, and went directly afterwards to M. Boucher's.

It was, we confess, to introduce this statement, which may be relied upon, that we mentioned the annoyance given to Mirabeau by the commandant, on account of two ladies. We also intend to exhibit another specimen of Mirabeau's excellent disposition. Two months after, forgetting the wrongs of which he had often justly complained, he took great pains to serve this same Rougemont, whom he had previously treated with such merited contempt.

"What think you of my trusty friend Rougemont, who has got me to draw up a huge statement for him?—and I am fool enough to do it†!"

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* Observations on a Defamatory Libel, entitled "Case and Counsel's Opinion for the Countess of Mirabeau," &c. p. 70.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated August 18th 1780.

Even the gentle Sophie was astonished to hear of this.

"So you have the great advantage of troubling yourself about the business of that fellow Rougemont. It was really singular his asking you! You are too good in fatiguing yourself to write statements for that odious Rougemont *."

Let us here insert another extract, of a higher order, which does honour to Mirabeau. Deeply afflicted at a calamity which we shall shortly describe, he wrote thus to Boucher.

"My friend, you know how sadly I stand in need of

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* Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated September 2nd 1780. To show all the merit of this act of kindness, we adduce, with very close dates (a space of nine days over a month), some fresh proofs of the inquisitorial annoyances and useless rigour practised by the commandant on Mirabeau. The two first instances occur in a letter written on the 11th of September 1780, inserted in the Vincennes collection, vol. iv. p. 276, and in another regarding the denial of a *glass to shave with*, for which Mirabeau had applied. "Lettres de Cachet," vol. ii. pp. 70, 71. As for the second example, we give it here:—

"The Count asks to have rings put upon his window curtain, but I have answered him, that the rules do not allow us to have any in his room, on account of the mischief which might result from anything made of iron; and that, without breaking this rule, we might substitute for these iron rings some strong loops of thread, to slide over a wooden rod propped by two wooden pegs."—*Unpublished letter from M. de Rougemont to M. Boucher, dated October 9th* 1780.

What more could they have done had he been a prisoner of state or a man condemned to imprisonment for life? Every one knew at this time the resolution already formed to release Mirabeau.

comfort: do comfort me then. I too mean to do you a service, by fulfilling the sacred duty incumbent on every man, of defending his fellow-creatures. Now is it just that, at a time when the king, by an edict which does him honour, has ordered that all prisoners, including even the convicts doomed to the wheel, shall enjoy light, air, and other wholesome comforts, a wretch who is only mad, and harmlessly mad, I mean that poor charnel-house writer who has called forth your pity, should continue for whole months without light and air, shut up in a dark cell in which he is attacked with scurvy. From his cell I saw removed, this very morning, a barrow full of absolute manure upon which he used to sleep, and it had never been changed before? Oh! my friend! it is not you who command such treatment; but it is you who will prevent it now that you know of its existence! You it was who ordered the poor wretch to be better fed, and I bless your charity, for he was once, seven months together, kept upon bread and water, except the broth which the kind-hearted turnkey used to give him by stealth; and this poor diet was immediately followed by scurvy *."

Amid every species of occupation Mirabeau continued to write to his uncle.

" I do not complain of your lecturing me: be assured

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to M. Boucher, dated June 8th 1780.

that my greatest ambition is to convince you. I suffer severe pain, I assure you; part of my ailment would certainly give way to a different mode of life, for I am naturally very robust; but my sight is going; and as reading and study are my only comforts in this place, I cannot bring myself to spare the little sight still left me. I am not sure that I have the stone, but am quite sure that I am threatened with it. Alas! my only happiness at present consists in my uncertainty of the nature and continuance of my complaints. I had rather doubt and suffer; but this strange kind of happiness is cruel agony. The officers of this establishment have exerted themselves, with the greatest kindness, to procure for me the best exercise that can be had here; but you must know that the only garden I have to roam in is but forty yards long, and fifteen wide, and my room is but twelve feet square!

"I have no longer any hesitation as to what course I shall pursue to atone for, or at least to palliate, and obliterate the errors for which I have so dearly paid. You have advised me, and I will be governed by you. I strive to take the imprint of your mind. I always loved it: and would to God I had never wandered from its track! Alas! my passions have given a vicious tendency to some endowments intended for the formation of virtue; but the principle is not extinct—it only slumbers, and has been vitiated. Believe me it is not extinct!

"I received your letter at the same time, and some-

what late, also one from M. de Marignane, a copy of which I enclose.

" I send likewise a copy of my replies, and am weak enough to think, from the state of my own heart, that they ought to produce some effect upon my father-in-law as well as upon my wife. I own to you that if I am disappointed, it will give me a moral pain much greater than the physical sufferings to which my error will expose me.

" I am troubled with a wish to write to my father. I have not yet done so; for I should like to be backed by some good letters from Provence. This is your advice, and I ought to follow it. But if I should not receive any, for I must be used to, and prepared for every kind of disappointment, do you think it would be impossible to induce my father to accept the half consent of M. de Marignane? If M. de Marignane will not allow me to enter his daughter's presence, one *lettre de cachet* is as effective as another. One which should limit my confinement to a certain space, would be as good as that which shuts me up in a dungeon. It would not require the separation he threatens me with, disagreeable to both families, and to which I still hope, and am almost convinced, he would not have recourse, if, which God forbid, he compelled me to speak plainly. I had rather, much rather, open my heart to peace, attachment, and gratitude, with which he and his daughter may yet inspire me. Pardon me,

my dear uncle, I fatigue and weary you, but I have no hope except through you * ! "

Who could believe that this letter would have kindled the anger of the Marquis of Mirabeau?

" That madman's letter is just as bad as the rest of them, and I feel my hopes expire in consequence. The most horrible point in it is, the invectives he constantly indulged in against his wife, and these are so frequent that they shake both his faith and ours. How frigid are his arguments !—how insane ! What is to be done with such a man ? I think him worse than Sade †, and some others confined in the same fortress. As for this sentence, 'if, which God forbid, he compelled me to speak plainly,' it appears to me to hold out a threat of another scene à la Moans ‡ "

The just and benevolent Bailli, whose prejudices were not so strong, endeavoured to dissuade his brother.

" I must confess that after reading your son's last letter of the 22nd May, I cannot perceive, as you do, that it destroys your hope. God forbid that I should pretend to see more clearly than a father; but the words

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to his uncle, the Bailli, dated May 22nd 1780.

† The author of " Justine," at that time a prisoner in the Donjon of Vincennes, where he was kept for twenty-nine years, for having put in action that monstrous romance, which he published towards the end of 1791.

‡ Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 27th 1780.

you quote have not the meaning you attribute to them. Pray consider that I am not the person he would have made choice of as a confidant for 'a scene à la Moans,' if he even intended, or wished to make us fear it. The plain fact is, that well knowing the laws of this country, being also aware of the sayings and doings of his wife, and of her weakness with regard to himself, he believes that a separation cannot be brought about; and I think so too, for nothing would render it definitive in Provence *."

Not satisfied with having shielded his nephew by this favourable interpretation, and by concealing from him his father's cruel prejudices, the Bailli wrote to him in the following terms:—

"Although you inform me that you do not find fault with my lecturing you, I shall abstain from it for two reasons: first, it would be needless to lecture a convert; secondly, if you are endeavouring to take me by surprise, that would be equally useless. At all events, I have pointed out to you, to the best of my ability, the surest and even the only means of alleviating your distress. I am persuaded that your father will never do more than assent to the request of your wife's family; and to speak to you candidly, I would do the same in his place. Still, since you state that you are troubled with a wish to write to him, I must say that I

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau dated July 8th 1780.

see no objection to your doing so, unless your Agamemnon's pride should whisper to you that you were about to strike a shadow, and was hurt by the apprehension. For my part, I see no humiliation in any step taken towards a father. This way of thinking may appear rather antiquated at a period so immoral as the present; but I am old, and see no sufficient reason to correct my notions on this head *."

The day after Mirabeau had written to the Bailli the letter dated May 22nd, a dreadful calamity befel this tender father, who, amid the most stormy events, in his recreation as in his studies, had always been reminded of his children, whether by joy or by grief, by persevering misfortune, or by transitory bliss; who was continually thinking of their wants, the perils of their childhood, their education, and the chances of their future life; who, from his youth upwards, had adopted the plan of making extracts in great public libraries, with a view to collect materials for an extensive system of education for his son; who, within the walls of a prison, read and extracted hundreds of volumes of works foreign to his private studies, in order that he might write, for the benefit of his daughter, a special treatise on " Inoculation *."

* See Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 215; vol. ii. pp. 412, 413, 433; vol. iii. pp. 148, 260, 375, 429, 439, 460, 508, 552, 594; vol. iv. pp. 73, 77, 142, 155, 202, 331. See also unpublished letters from Mirabeau to Vitry, pp. 6, 10.

The daughter whom he had by Sophie died whilst being weaned, from convulsions brought on by teething.

"Yesterday morning the Count heard the news which I had been charged to communicate to him. He was deeply affected. He sent, this morning, for the surgeon, who found him in the greatest agitation, and in a fever. He feels more for Madame de Monnier than for himself, and he testified great anxiety about the fittest mode of acquainting her with her loss *."

This state of anxiety was vividly expressed by the prisoner.

"Good God! what would you have me say to this wretched mother, who finds in a moment the weak foundation overthrown, upon which her tender solicitude had built the temple of her happiness! Alas! were I to see her, I might weep with her, and thus mitigate the terrible dispensation. But I must smother my grief in solitude, and yet impart it to her . . . . I was fated to endure the most afflictive trials!

"My friend, it was the mother that I loved in this child. I did not know the latter, but I felt how necessary she was to her mother, being the only tie

* Unpublished letter from M. de Rougemont to M. Boucher, dated May 26th 1780.

that bound her to life. It was the only possession she had left . . . . and even this was begrudged her. Let me die if I know how to communicate to her the fatal news; and yet I shudder lest she should know it through another channel; lest Diot * should inform her of it. If I hasten not to prepare her, this will certainly occur, and she will be still more overcome. I am therefore resolved the first to strike the chord of grief. But how shall I begin the sad story, and tell her that all her projects concerning this child were but a dream; and that nature which has made it our fate to survive her, has spared the poor babe a world of trouble? Alas! this nature has but one fault, which is to give us life, with its few pleasures, and its many pangs!!!! Oblige me, my friend, on this cruel occasion, by forwarding my letters to her, one after the other. Let me probe her wound, and endeavour to calm her sufferings. It is, in every light you may view it in, a painful duty which I am going to fulfil †."

The following day he despatched the eloquent letter

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* Mademoiselle Diot, frequently mentioned in the "Letters from Vincennes." Some very gross particulars concerning her (vol. iv. p. 144 and following) have been inserted by the slanderous Manuel, who, desirous of suiting his publication to the obscene taste of the times, has presented them *as if addressed to Sophie*, though really contained in a letter *written to Boucher*; and which original letter is now in our possession.

† Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated May 28th 1780.

inserted in the Vincennes collection, vol. iv. page 207. In it he took measures to lighten the first blow Sophie was to receive.

"I have been relieved by a wholesome emission of tears, which came and unlocked my heart a little. Alas! it is the mother only that I pity, though I am as wretched as herself. Will you be so kind as to send her my letter immediately, lest she should first receive one from Dijon; and do not add a single word of your own. I want to be sure that she reads my letter before she learns the dreadful tidings*."

The affectionate prudence of Mirabeau proved useless.

"What a frightful calamity, O my beloved! Our child is no more! I shall never behold her again! and you never saw her! What have we to suffer in future? Alas! I had almost a presentiment of the event, and the last letter from our good angel made me spend the night in tears. But does he not deceive us? —was it really from convulsions that we lost her? .... You recommend me to take care of my health, and your own is in a bad state. I can well believe it. What a fearful shock have we sustained! Yet you think only of my health. You forget your own pain to think of me .... How greatly was I affected when I learned all the precautions which your love for me had

* Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated May 29th 1780.

led you to take! Fate defeated your expectations; the box arrived two hours before the circuitous communication. I am always so eager to have a letter!—and although I hardly expected any, I could not be easy till the boy had been to the post-office. Ysabeau * arrived about five o'clock, and found me choking with the agony of tearless despair. Your tender letter soon forced a passage for my tears. He remained with me some time, and said all that was proper to encourage my tears and relieve my heart. .... Your gloomy note, had it come alone, would have disclosed all our unhappiness; but my heart is not less grateful for your attentive tenderness. It is no fault of any one that I discovered this terrible event †.

"I have just received your second note. Alas! you want to remove my fears for your health, and I see too plainly that it is in a bad state. Let us die together; but do you live for the present. Oh! live, since I too support my grief, and will live with you, and for you alone. It was only for you that I did live before, for it was my Gabriel that I loved in my daughter. It is a part of him that has been torn from me; it is more than a limb of yours that they have carried to the

* A skilful and benevolent surgeon who attended the Convent of Saint Claire, at Gien, and whom we have mentioned in the Introduction to this work.

† Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 2nd 1780.

grave. O God! ought we so soon to have been deprived of it! She was given to us by Fate, only to cause that perpetual grief we feel for her loss, to suffer incessant anxiety, and after all to see her taken from us!.... No matter! I am pleased to have had her, for I have had the bliss of making you a father, of bearing in my womb the fruit of our loves. I have been a mother.... but you! who never saw her!—who never enjoyed the delight of pressing her in your arms!—why are you always more unfortunate than I?..... Nothing now remains for us but one another. If any event should remove us from this world, we shall leave no being to suffer for our loss!..... Write to me, speak of your anguish, let me see it all! Into whose bosom but mine can you pour your sorrows? Where else can you look for consolation? You have restrained yourself too long. You increase your affliction, but in vain do you strive to hide any thing from me. I feel it as much as you. There is no loss but yours which I could not bear; that would leave me no remedy but death. Your daughter was very dear to me, but you must know how much dearer you are yourself. And yet what have we lost in this beloved child? Alas! every thing. I expected from her so much happiness for both! Still could we comfort each other, we should suffer less, and during a shorter time. But we are

denied every thing, even the happiness of weeping together *!. . . . My poor friend, you have been made to drink the cup even to its dregs. It was adding to your grief, to force you into contact with the first moment of mine; it was increasing its bitterness. There is no doubt, however, that the means you adopted to lessen my sorrow were successful. Your letter to our good angel was so full of feeling that it found a vent for my grief, and prevented too severe a shock. Besides, I felt a hope that you had said to yourself the same consolatory things that you wrote to me. . . . As you state so tenderly, you have but one Sophie left! . . . . . Yes, yes, it was you I loved in my daughter; and it is a part of you I am grieving for. But, I agree with you: we are afflicted for each other; and for her too, for you know we wished to make her happy—that we were preparing to do so—but we might have died instead of her, and left her in the hands of our enemies. Thus it is far better for her to be dead than with them. Does the loss of our poor child disgust you with life†? If it has become hateful, speak, I am ready; but I confess, I should bitterly regret any sacrifices which might cost more than their

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 4th 1780.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 10th 1780.

worth. Do not bid me attend to my health unless you will attend to yours. I am no longer necessary to my daughter, and if life is a burden to you, my own is already far gone. At any rate, your health is so much shattered, that I, who will not outlive you, shall always have enough of health left*. It is very true that I should have considered it the most frightful calamity had we been cruelly separated, when arrested, before we had again dwelt together; then I really believe we should not have had the courage to resist our fate. We should neither have desired to live, nor been capable of living. How much should we have lost? Ten months together make many hours of bliss! And our little darling, whom we no longer possess, but have possessed: ah! it is a great joy even to have possessed her! I have often thought, since our captivity, that it would be dreadful misery to know the future, if it were possible merely to know, and not to change it. For when we were in Holland, our softest moments would have been haunted with the fear of the fatal day which was to tear us asunder; and instead of all the pleasing hopes we nurtured of our Gabrielle Sophie, we should never have thought of anything but her death †!"

A circumstance in some degree tended to alleviate

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 15th 1780.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 20th 1780.

Sophie's grief. This was a mark of concern from Madame de Ruffey, for whom she had always felt both affection and respect, weakened indeed but not destroyed by the ascendency of passion.

" Sister Victoire has shown me a letter she has just received from my mother, who tells her that she has just heard of my daughter's death; that she fears the effect of this misfortune upon my health, but dares not mention the subject to me, not knowing whether I am aware of my loss. In short, Madame de Ruffey begs her to try and dissipate my sorrow. She appears very uneasy and greatly afflicted on my account. Her letter is extremely affectionate; and I will own to you that it excites my gratitude *."

We do not continue our extracts to prove a fact which must of course recur in every letter, and that every minute gave birth to impressions as natural as they were painful. But as repetitions would weary the reader, we conclude with this sentence :—

* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 17th 1780. This event makes it unnecessary for us to say more concerning the offspring of these unfortunate lovers; we therefore feel ourselves relieved from the duty of dwelling upon a fact mentioned several times in the " Letters from Vincennes," namely, the proceedings instituted at Pontarlier, by the Marquis of Monnier, or rather by Madame de Valdahon, to dispute the claims of Gabrielle Sophie to the title of daughter of the Marquis of Monnier. Such particulars would only be tedious, for they lost all interest, the moment the child's death put an end to the fears to which her birth had given rise.

" Had I learned our misfortune through our private correspondence, that important secret would almost to a certainty have been divulged *."

We have already spoken of this correspondence, carried on without Boucher's knowledge, by the address of the prisoners. We may judge how active it was by the following passage :—

" It is just a year since we began to write these secret letters, and I have been counting them all; by which it appears that we have despatched, on both sides, you as well as I, three hundred and sixty-seven, without counting good angel or the parcels. From this, I gather that we may make our minds easy as to the risk of discovery which we began to fear †."

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* Unpublished letter from Sophie to Mirabeau, dated June 22nd 1780.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated June 19th 1780.

APPENDIX TO BOOK V.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF INSPECTOR MURON TO THE LIEUTENANT GENERAL OF POLICE.

"On my arrival at Dijon, I went to Madame la Présidente Ruffey, to receive her further instructions. She gave me to understand that there was in the town a certain Chevalier Maçon, a half-pay officer, a friend of the Sieur Mirabeau's, and his companion and confidant. She further stated, that if any person could manage to become intimate with the said Maçon, and obtain his confidence, the place of the said Sieur Mirabeau's concealment might be drawn from him *".

The inspectors availed themselves of this information.

"The Sieur Brugnière went and lodged at the same inn as this Maçon, and found means to become intimate with him, by pretending to have the same inclinations, and by going with him to fencing schools, billiard rooms, and similar places †."

The inspectors having discovered some traces, hastened to Geneva, and found—

"That the Sieur Mirabeau had arrived there on the 5th of June, but had left it immediately for Thonon, where two females, in men's clothes, having joined him, they all proceeded together to Chambery, and thence to Turin. From Thonon we could not ascertain the route they had pursued; for they used a thousand stratagems to

* Report, dated from Lyons, July 11th 1776.

† Same Report.

conceal it from us. After three days of incredible fatigue, we succeeded in finding the coach-conductor with whom they had travelled. We are now going to follow them, and have reason to believe we shall not be long in overtaking them *.'

This hope was not realised.

" What assists us a little, I mean Brugnière and myself, is that the Sieur Mirabeau and his retinue, though armed like a party of smugglers, have further purchased pistols, and swords, and even a hanger with a pistol concealed in the hilt. This we learned at Geneva. They take abominable cross-about roads, to avoid passing through France.

" After having gained all possible intelligence at Geneva, we set out from Seyssel, a town partly in Savoy, partly in France, through which the Sieur Mirabeau had passed, and following their track step by step, we reached Lyons, where these gentlemen adopted the most mysterious measures, and the most impenetrable stratagems to enter the city. Thus we were again at fault. Having renewed our wearisome inquiries, we made out that one St. Jean, a confidential servant of Madame de Cabris, had assisted in concealing the Sieur Mirabeau, and had attended him in his place of concealment. This St. Jean was now the servant of a certain M. de Brianson, an officer in the infantry regiment Royal Roussillon. We had St. Jean followed, and his actions watched. We learned that he had involved himself in a petty broil, and would appear next day at the police-office. We accordingly went thither, and put M. de la Rochette in our secret. We told him how urgent it was for the success of our mission, to draw the necessary information from St. Jean. The said St. Jean came to the office, and we questioned him. Not being on his guard, and seeing us besides so well informed as we were from our preceding exertions, he concealed nothing. It would have spoiled all to have dismissed St. Jean; he would then have apprised the Marchioness of Cabris, and she would have acquainted her brother; for it is she, not Mdlle. Raucour †, who had come to Geneva to join him, together with Mdlle.

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* Report, dated from Geneva, July 20th 1776.

† A slight resemblance in person and features had deceived the French president at Geneva, M. D'Henir, and led him to believe that Madame de Cabris

Delatour de Beaulieu, both attired in men's clothes. It was of the greatest importance to make sure of St. Jean; so I thought it expedient to arrest him, and I received orders for M. de Borry, commanding at Pierre-en-Size, to allow the prisoner to be shut up.

" This was the only place where the secret would have been safe, and the least disturbance would have baffled all we had done, and prevented what we have yet to do. The Sieur Mirabeau, on leaving his friend Brianson, who, I believe, is a worthless man, confided to St. Jean that he was going to Lorgue, in Provence, Brianson's birth-place, and that subsequently Brianson would accompany him to Nice, whence he intended to embark for Genoa, where he purposed staying a month. We start for Avignon to-night; and have been questioning the boatmen who took them *.

" Brugnière and I are at present at Antibes. We have traced the Count of Mirabeau as far as Frejus, and from Frejus, with uncertainty, to Antibes. We shall set out for Nice to-morrow morning, whence he may have sailed for Genoa, or perhaps for England, as he had sixteen days' start of us †."

This chase also proved unsuccessful; and the inspectors returned to Aix.

" I had the honour to inform you of what M. Brugnière and I had done, as far as Lyons, and what we had hoped to accomplish in consequence of St. Jean's declarations. We followed the Count of Mirabeau's track down the Rhone from Lyons, where he had taken boat to Avignon. Here he took post horses, having hired them half a league out of the town. He also purchased a pair of pistols,

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was Mademoiselle Raucour (of the Comédie Française), at that time a fugitive (*Same Report, dated July 20th* 1776.) But this mistake did not extend to the Marquis of Mirabeau.

" A famous adventuress has joined his party, with another woman; she is supposed to be Raucour, the actress; I do not believe it, for I know the likeness to the Lyons lady (Madame de Cabris)."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 27th* 1776.

" She said she was going to Lyons for the benefit of her health, and rode forward at a devil of a rate" (*Letter from the same to the same, dated August 10th* 1776), " disguised in man's clothes."—*Ibid., August 22nd* 1776.

* Muron's Report, dated from Lyons, July 26th 1776.

† Report from the same, dated from Antibes, August 3rd 1776.

and after that, returned to Avignon concealed in the cabriolet, to take letters to the post-office. He left the city at night-fall. At this time, the fair of Beaucaire was being held, and the cabriolet was so lost in the crowd, that we found it impossible to pursue its track. Nevertheless, St. Jean, the servant, whom I had been cautious enough to keep in custody, pointed out the road they had taken, and I recovered the scent at Brignole. We came as far as Luc, where we had to take several measures to prevent discovery, since Luc is only three leagues from Lorgues, the abode of M. Brianson, who is the bosom friend of the Count of Mirabeau. We found means to introduce ourselves to a lawyer of the name of Marsaut, an honest man, who gave us every possible information; and as we found him to be a man of discretion, we let him entirely into our secret. Marsaut took us to the village of Lorgues, where he was born, and has estates. There he introduced us to this same Brianson, with whom we supped. We gave ourselves out for Lyons merchants, travelling, one to Genoa and to Italy, the other only to Genoa, and who intended returning to Provence together by the same road. This was the best way to draw out Brianson, and induce him to give us a letter for his friend, since he might thus receive an answer. We found it quite hopeless to attempt gaining any information from him; but the innkeeper informed us that Brianson had arrived on the 16th at night, with an individual calling himself the Chevalier Brie *; that on the 19th these two gentlemen had set out on foot at six o'clock in the evening, without any luggage, and Brianson had returned alone; that his companion was supposed to have taken the mail at Vidauban, or at Muy, in order to embark at St. Raphael for Italy, and reach Rome, where he said he wanted to be; that this Chevalier Brie had been recognised by several of the inhabitants of Lorgues as the Count of Mirabeau, and even by the innkeeper himself. We went on to the village of Vidauban, where we were informed that he had not been seen either at the post-office, or any where else. At Muy we were told the same story, so that we lost all trace of him at that place, even when we seemed the most sure. We hoped to obtain some tidings at Frejus, since St. Raphael is within gun-shot of it.

* Name of an estate belonging to the Marchioness of Mirabeau.

There we saw M. Maunier, a commissioner of the navy, for whom we had a letter of recommendation, and who made every inquiry, both at Frejus and St. Raphael. He even sent people along the coast as far as Cannes and Grasse, but could learn nothing. He gave us a letter to the naval commissioner at Cannes, a neighbouring port. The same inquiry was there set on foot, but without better success. In fine, Sir, we resolved to push on to Nice, in Savoy, thinking that as it was a foreign territory, the Count of Mirabeau might be less upon his guard. We were provided with letters of recommendation for the consul, who took the trouble to go himself to the lieutenant-general of police, and every imaginable inquiry was made, but it led to nothing except the following indication:—

"When you quit Provence to enter the country of Nice, you have to ford the Var, a torrent almost always dangerous, and often not fordable. It is sometimes a quarter of a league across at its greatest width, and extremely rapid at all seasons of the year. The danger, however, is always exaggerated by report, so that travellers who have to cross it, never speak of it but with alarm. On each bank are stationed a number of robust men, who make it their business to convey travellers over, by going first, and fencing them round with strong sticks, to show the depth of water, which often varies several times during the day. At present there is no danger whatever to be feared; but the forders, who are so many quacks, and live at the expense of timid travellers, take good care to go before them, and increase their alarm. The men who assisted us across the torrent, told us that they had offered their services to a gentleman whose appearance agreed with our description of the man we are looking for; but he refused their assistance, and got across by following the country-women, who went over without guides. They added that he shunned being looked at too closely. Having made more particular inquiries, we learned that this gentleman had entered a mean wine-shop some distance off, and refreshed himself; that he had a gold box, with the portrait of a female upon the lid:—in short, they gave the same description we had before obtained. He had asked them if they knew at Nice of any ship ready to sail for Italy; they told him of one going to England; and that Nice presented opportunities for sailing to all parts of

Italy. They further informed us that the gentleman had departed, and had crossed the Var just above where we were, as I have the honour to inform you, Sir. I must make known to you that there is no police at Nice; and that strangers go in and out of it without hindrance. We entered the town and left it, returned to it, and left it again by other gates, and not a question was asked. Yet we were told,in answer to the inquiries we made there, that an unknown individual had embarked at Villefranche, another little port adjoining Nice. The description of his person perfectly agreed with ours, except that he then had on a red coat, whereas the Count of Mirabeau has hitherto worn a green, brown, or dark grey coat. He sailed for England. Notwithstanding this intelligence, we have sent to the mountains, people acquainted with all the cross roads. M. Brugnière rides a mule accustomed to these frightful hills; he is accompanied by a guide, and has made every possible search. In a word, Sir, we have done all that the human mind can conceive, and during the most intolerable heat. We are overcome with fatigue; our legs are swollen, and we are proceeding to Lyons, where we hope you will be so good as to allow us three days' rest, for we are quite exhausted.

"The Marquis of Mirabeau certainly warned me that his son was marvellously clever. He was advised by the Marchioness of Cabris, his sister; it is therefore by no means wonderful that his schemes have succeeded. Further, the consul at Nice told us that the couriers from Rome and Italy, who take shipping either at Antibes or Nice, are never examined, and that they take advantage of this freedom, to carry passengers over with them. He may have availed himself of such an opportunity *."

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* Report by Muron, dated from Aix, August 8th 1776.

BOOK VII.

We find in the Vincennes collection of Letters, and more positively still in the letters we possess, a proof that attempts were made, towards the beginning of 1779, and repeated, with much perseverance, to bring back Sophie to her husband. Madame de Ruffey, who, contrary to her own opinion, took up the matter with an active but prudent and cautious earnestness, apprehended various difficulties. She wrote thus to her daughter :—

" Now that you are asking for what you have long refused, you, doubtless, would not return to your husband except with a view to recover your rights, and then leave him a second time—thus affording the public a second example of scandalous conduct. I presume that the two parties are as tired as their families of being exposed to reports which both are anxious should be forgotten. The Abbé Pourcheresse sees your husband now but seldom: he says it was unfortunate that his daughter had so much gained the upper hand of him that it was impossible to effect a reconciliation, which religion ordains, as well to put an end to public scandal as to repair the injury done by the husband to his wife, by judicial proceedings; that it was not possible even to write to the Marquis of Monnier, because his daughter interfered in everything, and because he is blind, inexorable, and fearfully obstinate. Besides, you can neither gain access to him nor write to him, were it even practicable. So great is his daughter's influence over him, that he would at one moment promise what he would not perform an hour later; and for fear of surprise he will not sign his name to anything unless his daughter is by his side. How can any thing be risked where there is so much weakness? It might produce a good effect were you to run the risk of kneeling before him; but with a blind man this posture would lose half its effect, for sight assists very materially in kindling emotion; and if we find no feeling in this man, he may allow you to be arrested at his house, before the reconciliation is sure. On this point there is everything to fear. By the tenour of the law proceedings we may judge of Madame de Valdahon's influence, also that you were the victim they had fixed upon, and that your ruin was contemplated. Thus, every one being devoted to

him, whilst you, having none to support you but so weak a man, it would be incurring the risk of a prison, a thing I never would allow *."

Sophie had less doubt than her mother of the success of this measure; she determined, therefore, to write to her husband a very submissive letter, which we insert below †. But she did not communicate her intention to Mirabeau, who was opposed to it ‡ from a similar feeling of generosity: we say a similar feeling, because there

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* Letter from Madame de Ruffey to Sophie, dated April 29th 1779.

† April 27th 1779. "Shall I, Sir, be more fortunate with this letter than with several others I have already written to you, none of which you have answered? Still I shall never grow weary of repeating to you how much I regret having given you offence. My disposition to confess my faults is a guarantee that I wish to expiate them. I am overcome with grief, Sir, at having displeased you: tell me by what means I may atone for the past. Religion points out to me that it is a duty to ask your forgiveness, and inclination urges me to seek it. The more I owe to you, Sir, the stronger will become the tie which binds me to you. My only thought is how to recover the place in your heart which I have forfeited, and from which I do not desire to exclude any one; it is good and generous enough to permit us all to occupy our proper places in it. You will do me the justice to remember that this was all I ever wished. It is not the weariness of solitude, Sir, which induces me to appeal to your kindness: my family have spared no pains to make this solitude endurable. But I wish to be obliged to you alone, and for this I am endeavouring to excite your generosity in my behalf. My misfortunes and transgressions have matured my mind, and I may therefore assure you that you will now find all you desire in my disposition and conduct. If you ever loved, Sir, the woman who is bound to you by an indissoluble tie, you cannot have altogether closed your heart against her. The father of the prodigal son excused the faults of his youth, and took him back with goodness, even with tenderness. Why may I not expect as much from him whose name I bear—from a husband full of pity, whose anger and repugnance are overwhelming grievances to my heart? Give me then, I conjure you, Sir, some signs of returning pity: Heaven will requite you a hundred fold for the happiness you may confer upon me. Nor shall I long continue a burden to you: my health is so shattered by anguish of mind that I easily perceive I have not long to live. I shall see my end, however, approach without repining, if you recall me, and allow me to die in your presence. This act of mercy which I implore you to grant me, Sir, shall not exceed the everlasting gratitude of your wife."

‡ See Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. pp. 256, 376, 387, 394.

is no mode to explain this step of Sophie's, unless she wanted to purchase the liberation of her lover by the sacrifice of herself. He mentions, in a letter written October 3rd 1779 *, that a friend of the Ruffey family came to see him at Vincennes. This friend was M. de Marville †, who, it seems, wished to ascertain the influence which the prisoner possessed over Sophie, and prevail on him to use that influence in effecting a reconciliation with the Marquis of Monnier. We abstain from stating particulars with the more readiness because we find the event recorded in another letter, which appears to us as explicit as it is interesting, and extracts from which we here insert without hesitation, because the letter has never appeared in print.

" I am tenderly grateful to you, my dear friend ‡, for your obliging letter, and affectionate intentions. But here we are returned to the very elements of my case.

" To settle all doubts on this matter, I must tell you that I would advise Sophie to return to her husband, if he fixed that as the condition for withdrawing his action. The withdrawal should however precede her return; for he is not a man of sufficient honour for her to trust to his word, unless she is prepared for a scene against which the law might indeed protect her, but which would still be painful. I will go further, and assert, upon my honour, that I should have great fears for her life in that house.

" But I will neither say nor believe that she can with prudence or dignity run to beg the forgiveness of a man who, if he had the least sense of delicacy, would not now persecute her, but would never take her back. Nor will I allow that she ought to confess herself an adultress; for I swear, by everything sacred, that she is not, and never was his wife §, and that if I were placed in the same

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* See Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 366 and following.

† M. de Marville was a friend and relative of the Ruffey family; he was proprietor of the castle (built, they say, by Anne of Brittany) which overlooks the town of Gien, and he exercised a kind of secular patronage over the Convent of St. Claire, in which Sophie was imprisoned.

‡ Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Boucher, dated October 13th 1779.

§ Mirabeau constantly affirmed that, on the 13th of December 1775, the marriage of Sophie, which took place July 1st 1771, had not yet been consummated.

situation I would be torn to pieces before I would acknowledge a crime I had not committed. However, I shall not prevent her from subscribing to whatever she thinks proper.

" But, my friend, you and M. de Marville have built your argument upon an illusion, if you believe that the Marquis of Monnier, closely guarded as he is by the Valdahons, will take back his wife. Further, I am convinced that I could not myself prevail upon the lady to return. In one of the papers in lemon juice *, which we have destroyed for ever, were written these very words: ' if you would have me return, I will return; but after taking poison, that I may be either dead or dying when I arrive.' This is the little chicken you think so tame and tractable, and of whom M. de Marville coolly said to me—

" ' She never would have left her husband, but at your instigation.'

" ' Sir,' I replied, with still greater coolness, ' no one can know the truth of this matter except Madame de Monnier and I.'

" The Marchioness of Monnier is the meekest of women in her domestic intercourse; and the evenness of her temper, joined to her singular sensibility, is a phenomenon;—but her heart is full of impetuosity and her imagination the most vivid that ever existed.

" I am convinced you do not suspect that from any feeling of jealousy I would prevent her from returning to an old man near eighty, whom she abhors, and who has scarcely even polluted her lips. My only motive is a repugnance founded upon natural delicacy, and the uneasiness I should feel at the thought of her being in such a den of wild beasts. But if it was by telling me that Madame de Monnier's refusal had raised her in M. de Marville's estimation, that this gentleman sought to sound my inclinations as to her return to Pontarlier, it is a singular way of sounding a man's opinion. As to the ' measures for the revision of the suit,' you are right, and I told M. de Marville that I should have no difficulty in getting the decree quashed by proving that the witnesses were bribed; but that it would be quite as prudent not to revive the suit.

" I cannot conceive, my very dear friend, how you too can urge to me the personal advantages I have in the settlement of Madame de

* An allusion to the fraud we have related in the present volume.

Monnier's case.—1st, You know that your lawyer considers them absolutely divided, and positively asserts, that to settle the case for one would not be settling it for both. 2ndly, Your notion might be very correct if my father were more equitable, or possessed less influence; but if the proceedings were burned to-morrow he would keep me just as surely shut up in the Donjon of Vincennes. You cannot doubt that he would; nor can you doubt any more that he could at once sway the Monniers if he chose. Then what personal motive can I have in all this business, except Madame de Monnier's advantage? When Dupont asked my father what reasons there were, his pardon being granted, which could prevent my release, did you hear him allege this suit as an obstacle?

"My friend, I am, generally speaking, of all men living one of those who think less of themselves when their heart is affected. In the present case it is not my own situation that moves me. I have deeply reflected upon the subject. My father alone can save me, so long as Government abstains from spontaneously interfering in my behalf. I certainly wish most earnestly that Madame de Monnier's troubles were at an end; but I wish it only on her own account."

Thus we see that Mirabeau, either because he was unacquainted with Sophie's magnanimous motive, or because he placed no reliance upon its results, or else thought that she was paying too dearly for it, pursued a very different line of conduct. He concealed nothing from her, nor did he write to any other person in a different manner from that adopted towards herself. Whilst Sophie was entreating for only an unconditional pardon, a simple reconciliation by the fact of her return, he wanted her to demand the previous withdrawal of the action, and that her condemnation should be set aside *. Meanwhile, Sophie not only concealed the steps she was taking, but even denied them †, and, descending for the only time in her life to duplicity, which puts the finishing stroke to her glorious devotion, she went so far as to reproach Mirabeau with much 'warmth,

* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iv. pp. 4—8.

† Peuchet asserts that she was resolutely fixed in her determination (vol. i. p. 391).

eloquence, love, and virtue *,' for having urged her to return to the Marquis of Monnier †; a reproach which he repelled with the same spirit, by alleging and repeating ‡ his former explanations. On the other hand, although he advised Sophie, in conformity to the interest of both, and to the dignity of their condition and their cause, he loudly disclaimed any wish to injure the family of the Marquis of Monnier.

"My project," said he, "would deprive her daughter of a station, but of an odious station, which does not rightly belong to her §. I will never sanction, by my advice, Gabrielle Sophie becoming Mdlle. de Monnier. My delicacy, my reason, my conscience, and my love will not allow it ||."

In fine, he persisted on a much more serious occasion.

Deeming himself at the point of death, and recommending Gabrielle Sophie to his brother, Viscount Mirabeau, he said—

"You will easily believe that I can never consent to be an accomplice in an evident robbery, which would be committed, if they were to settle upon my daughter the property of a man wrongly reputed her father, and whose natural heirs would, perhaps, become victims of the fraud ¶."

Sophie continued resolute **, and even impatient, if we may place faith in a letter from her mother.

"I see great difficulties in the way; yet I serve you as faithfully as if I approved of the step. If, however, it does not succeed, have the good sense not to grieve, and make up your mind to wait until circumstances bring about your freedom. You have always said, that provided M. de Mirabeau was happy, you should feel so too. Since you are convinced that the moment of his happiness is so near at hand ††, you must form your resolution accordingly. If you

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* Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iv. p. 72.

† Ibid., vol. iv. p. 36. ‡ Ibid., vol. iv. p. 71—76.

§ Ibid., vol. iv. p. 164. || Ibid., vol. iv. p. 184; see also pp. 182—185.

¶ Ibid., vol. iv. p. 315.

** And yet, at the same time, she wrote to Mirabeau—"I think the Pontarlier negociation will succeed, because I am almost dead with the fear of it." —*Unpublished letter, dated May 19th* 1780.

†† Letter from Madame de Ruffey to Sophie, dated July 27th 1780. An allusion to the speedy liberation of Mirabeau.

were fortunate enough to feel that God directs all things, that He it is who regulates every event for the best, and that, when we have applied secondary causes as aptly as prudence and reason allow us, we must still rely on Him—you would surely feel more happiness and peace of mind than you can derive from the false philosophy lately imparted to you *."

Madame de Ruffey all this time would not exert herself for any one but her daughter.

" If you mean to include any but yourself in the treaty, I shall send your papers back, and decline taking any further steps in the matter †. If you wish the troubles of other people to terminate as well as yours, the interested parties must use their own exertions to that effect. I will know nothing about it. When you informed me that they were acting only for yourself, I did not believe it. Had I been sure I was right, I should have suspended my interference, being very averse to owe any thing to a hand which has pierced my heart ‡."

We shall not prolong this episodical narrative. Our letters show that Sophie no longer used mystery; that with Mirabeau's consent she continued to act; and that Madame de Valdahon, putting to a very natural, and it must be confessed, a very proper use, the influence she had over her father, whose infirmities daily increased, was very careful to remove whatever might have tended effectually to a reconciliation which must have placed once more in jeopardy her fortune and that of her children, together with the peace and happiness of all parties concerned.

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* Letter from Madame de Ruffey to Sophie, dated May 1st 1780.

† Ibid., July 27th 1780.

‡ Letter from Madame de Ruffey to Sophie, dated August 11th 1780.

THE END.

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